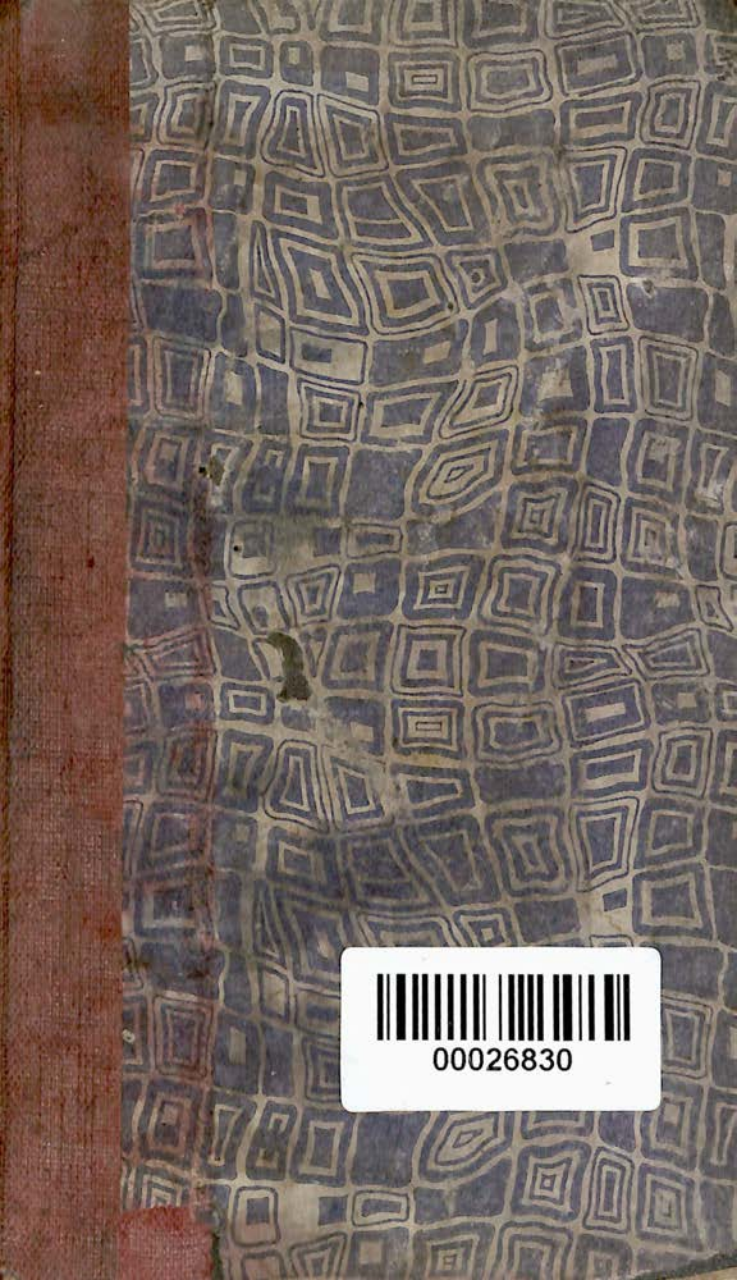
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DISSENT AND DEMOCRACY;

THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS AND COMMON OBJECT:

AN HISTORICAL REVIEW.

BY

RICHARD MASHEDER, B.A.,

FELLOW, MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; AND OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

"Ἄνθρωπος φύσει πολιτικὸν ζῷον.
Τοιαύτη δ' ἡ πολιτικὴ φαίνεται· ἡ κυριωτάτη καὶ μάλιστα ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν.—ARISTOTLE.

Si alterâ parte cludet respublica, claudet alterâ.—LIVY (*adapted*).

26830
ac

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DISSENT AND DEMOCRACY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE object in view in the following pages may be stated in few words. Briefly, it is none other than to trace out and place before the public a concise but harmonious and complete history of the principles and objects of Dissent, politically considered; of its organisations internally, to advance those objects and principles; and of the party relations, contracted externally, in the same spirit, from the Revolution of 1688 up to the present time. This interval, for reasons that will appear, I propose to divide into four several epochs: the first, beginning with the Revolution, and ending with the year 1831; the second, dating from 1832 to 1844; the third, from 1844 to 1859; and the fourth, from 1859 to the present time. These epochs will be further distinguished: the first, as a period when Dissent,

as a system, was neither allied to, nor identified with, democratic principles. The second, as a period when Dissent though identified with, was not allied to either form of Liberalism, either to the democratic section, called Radicalism, or to the constitutional section, called Whiggism; the third, as a period when Dissent was both identified with, and allied to, democracy, or Radicalism; and the fourth, as a period when Dissent became both identified with, and allied to, Liberalism; when, therefore, Dissent, Democracy, and Whiggism were and are all combined, and Liberalism accordingly is playing the part of accomplice to the Liberation Society. To the four chapters thus divided, other two will be added; one devoted to an enumeration of the measures introduced into Parliament since the year 1832, and of those now being agitated or about to be agitated for the special relief and benefit of Dissent; the other dedicated to a consideration of the consequences of those measures, and the duties of Churchmen and Constitutionalists, in regard to the new positions assumed by Dissent and Liberal politicians.

With respect to other and particular results, I hope to show, first, that the principles and objects now professed by the Liberation Society, were openly professed at least thirty years ago, and have

ever since been recognised as the tenets and designs of Dissenters, by a regular and continuous organisation; secondly, that so far from being new, or beginning in 1853 or 1844, the organisation of Dissent for political purposes originated at least one hundred and thirty years ago, in the reign of the second George, and that it has continued—*uno tenore*—in one unbroken line of succession from 1732 to 1864. In the third place, I shall endeavour to point out what is really new, namely, the connection of Dissent with political parties; a connection, however, which sprang up naturally in 1832, out of the events of the time, and which, though neither regular nor constant during the first ten years or so, may be, I believe, distinctly defined for the last twenty years at least.

As the consequence of such a review, I also cherish the hope of throwing some fresh light upon the tactics of political Dissent—its *modus operandi*—the course it steers on the ocean of politics. This I shall endeavour to demonstrate to be none other than the old course of democracy. It is by way, first, of a £6 borough franchise, then of universal suffrage, the ballot, annual parliaments, equal electoral districts, and "a reasonable remuneration to members of Parliament," that Dissent calculates upon reaching the

goal proposed—the separation of Church and State. But, whilst the main objects and results are such as I have described, I flatter myself that other results of scarcely less importance will ensue as well, which will prove alike interesting and useful. Of these, one of the most inevitable, but perhaps the least to be regretted, will be the reflection shed by the narrative upon the lives and conduct of some of the leading politicians of the day. Occasionally, the characters exhibited will appear strangely incongruous, and even verging on the grotesque; but the fault will not be mine. In every case I shall present to my readers the subjects as painted by themselves, and fresh from that incomparable gallery of autograph portraits—the pages of Hansard. With respect to political Dissent itself, I trust to be able to announce a few discoveries. More particularly, we shall find, notwithstanding protestations to the contrary, that Dissent has contracted a vicious habit of suppression, of telling possibly the truth, but not the whole truth. Another familiar maxim of Dissent is to carry out—

> "The good old law, the simple plan,
> That they should take, who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

With regard to explanations, I have to say, that the

narrative has been composed rather with an eye to accuracy and consistency, than to diffuseness and display. My chief aim has been to supply authentic facts and literal statements, rather than egotistical dogmatism. I have preferred to furnish materials upon which my readers may exercise their own intellect and reason, to surfeiting them with speculations of my own imagination and foregone conclusins, however dear to myself. At the same time, I trust that the scales of Justice have been held evenly —that neither in quoting the statements of others, nor in interpreting them, have I allowed the wish to be father to the thought. In every instance, my honest endeavour has been, not only to give the actual words used, but to convey the meaning intended by the authors themselves, and confirmed by the context. Further, that there may be no mistake, I mean to produce not only the best authorities, but names, dates, and places as well, so that my case may stand or fall absolutely on its own merits, and not rest upon adventitious supports. But I have restricted myself rigorously to the task proposed. This work is what it professes to be—an historical compendium—not a dissection either of doctrinal points, or of abstract questions of government. The standard of government to which I refer, is the one prepared to hand—the British constitution

—consisting as it does of the union of Church and State, of the Established Church as it is, combined with a hereditary, though limited monarchy, a hereditary aristocracy, and the democratic element, represented by a House of Commons, under the provisions of the settlement of 1832. After perusing what I have compiled, I trust that no one will be able to plead ignorance either of the constitutional or the revolutionary movements of the day, or of the position of political parties relative thereto. If there be one portion of English history less known than another to the present rising generation, it is that of the first fifteen years next following upon the Reform Act of 1832. No period, however, is richer in lessons of constitutional principles. Upon this part, therefore, I have expended much diligence and care. But that the following pages were necessarily composed in haste, the internal evidence will show. I would also remark, that by the word Dissent is meant what is often expressed by the two words, political dissent—a definition which includes not only Dissenters, but Irish Romanists and Repealers, latitudinarians and infidels as well, but which excludes the Wesleyan body, who are rightly termed Nonconformists, or religious Dissenters. In conclusion, it only remains for me to express a hope, that besides its permanent influence,

and in addition to that influence, this effort of mine, in prospect of a general election, for which extraordinary provision has been made by democratic Dissent, may not prove altogether futile in guiding aright the conscientious Churchman and Constitutionalist, whenever and wherever his vote and interest shall be solicited.

CHAPTER I.

FROM 1688 TO 1832.

DISSENT NEITHER ALLIED TO, NOR IDENTIFIED WITH, DEMOCRACY.

In his "Elements of Morality" (vol. ii., p. 233), Dr. Whewell thus briefly summarises the political history of the Established Church and Dissent from the time of the Reformation downwards:—"The polity of an Established National Church was cast in such a form that Dissenters were at first punished as such. This kind of polity was in England (in 1688) soon succeeded by one in which toleration was granted to Dissenters, including liberty of worship under certain conditions; but the exclusion of Dissenters from many offices in the State was continued as a protection to the Church of England. This exclusion has now, in a great measure, been abolished; yet still, the Church of England, by the possession of most of the property, dignities, and functions, which have in former times belonged to

the Established Church, continues to be preserved as the Established Church."

On the first of these phases, the era of persecution, it is neither necessary, nor to my purpose, to comment. The times were out of joint. From the Reformation, and much more before the Reformation, up to the Revolution, persecution was fashionable; and whether Romanism, the Church of England, or Dissent was uppermost, each by turns fell in with the ruling fashion only with too great alacrity.

It is the second period referred to, when Dissenters were excluded from many offices in the State, and extending from 1688 to 1830, or thereabouts, to which, first of all, I would bespeak attention.

That from the very origin of Dissent in England, there has lurked in its soil the germ of a Liberation Society, no one will be disposed to deny. But we know that during the golden age of the Commonwealth and the reign of the Saints, the ancestors of modern Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, so far from objecting to Church endowments, actually ejected several thousands of the Episcopalian clergy, and then entered in and took possession of the benefices themselves. And when those tolerant, enlightened sectaries sat on high, they carried their State Church

prejudices so far as, for the first and last time in our history, to enforce church rates by Act of Parliament, regardless altogether of the wishes or feelings of parishioners.

Neither in the matter of tithe did those "fathers of Nonconformity" exhibit any great amount of fastidiousness, except in their watchful provisions for punctual and true payment. The learned author of a work,* recently published, has set this question at rest for ever in the following lines :—

"Under the usurped government of Cromwell, and during the time when the Independents and Presbyterians were fighting for supremacy, neither party was averse from a continuance of the support of a civil establishment of religion, and both sets of 'godly ministers' kept a sharp look-out for tithes. In A.D. 1644, they got an ordinance made by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, 'for the true payment of tithes and other such duties,

* "The Anti-State Church Association and the Anti-State Church League Unmasked, an Exposure of the Fallacies and Misrepresentations contained in Mr. E. Miall's 'Title-Deeds of the Church of England to her Parochial Endowments.' By John Pulman, of the Middle Temple, Barrister. London : William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row." Mr. Miall once boasted that by his work on Title-Deeds he had put the Church upon her defence. Mr. Pulman, in his Exposure, has not only put Mr. Miall on his defence, but convicted him on some of the gravest charges ever imputed to a literary criminal.

according to the laws and customs of the realm.' On the 9th of August, 1647, there was made 'an additional ordinance of the Lords and Commons for the true payment of tithes and other duties;' and in the same year, another, 'for keeping in godly ministers placed in livings by authority of Parliament.' In A.D. 1648, another ordinance was made in Parliament 'for the better payment of tithes and duties to the ministers of the city of London.' These godly ministers then hit upon an expedient to increase their incomes. On the 29th April, 1652, they succeeded in getting this resolution passed, 'That it be referred to the committee appointed to receive proposals for the better propagation of the Gospel, to take into speedy consideration how a competent and convenient maintenance for a godly and able ministry may be settled in lieu of tithes, and present their opinion thereon to the House; and that tithes shall be paid as formerly, until such maintenance be settled.'"

Truly, those godly ministers, under the saintly unction of the Commonwealth, failed lamentably in their comprehension of the real nature of tithe. It never seems to have occurred to their spiritual minds that either church rates, or tithe, or glebe, or Easter "duties," or parsonage houses, or churches, were "national property." Otherwise, they plun-

dered the State most unmercifully. To the greatest luminaries of Nonconformity, indeed, we hesitate not to appeal as to friendly witnesses in favour of State churches.

With respect to Matthew Henry, I may ask, how comes it that his original exposition of Matt. xvii. 24—27, which turns upon the payment of "church duties," is wholly omitted in some of the latest editions of his Commentary? If, again, the late Bicentenary Commemoration of 1862 reminded us of anything, it was this—that some 2000 Nonconformists in 1662 felt it to be a sore trial and grievance to have to vacate those benefices of the State Church into which they had been inducted on the eviction of the rightful occupants by the triple power of fanaticism, fraud, and force, during England's reign of terror. That the modern Anti-State-Church Association, indeed, proceeds upon a totally different footing to the elder Nonconformists, —that the former are to be regarded, in fact, rather in the light of political Dissenters, and the latter simply as Nonconformists to the doctrine and discipline of the Church, on religious grounds,—is sufficiently clear from one of the earliest tracts of the British Anti-State-Church Association on "Organisation," which proceeds thus:—"It has been suggested that this movement is premature. The

most cursory glance at the history of Dissent will show that this effort could scarcely have been made at an earlier period, whilst it may be plausibly maintained that it could not have been much longer delayed, without a manifest want of faithfulness and zeal. The fathers of Nonconformity did not understand the principle at all; this was not the ground of all their secession. They were thrust out from the Establishment, because they could not conscientiously conform to its usages—not because they had any objection to State pay. They desired nothing so much as a national church, whose canons and constitutions should be so framed as to allow some latitude to the dictates of conscience. In such a Church they would have been content to live and die."

I believe, therefore, that previous to 1830, neither the thoughts nor the inclinations of Dissenters as a body ran upon the severance of Church and State. Their aims went no farther than the removal of civil disabilities—the repeal of what, from Dr. Whewell's words, we may term the Dissenters' Exclusion Bill. To protect both the Church and themselves from the machinations of Popery, Dissenters had supported the Test Acts. As soon as Popery was harmless, or fancied to be so, they began to agitate for the repeal of what

appeared a useless and degrading Statute, not, however, to injure the Church, but to extend their own liberties. Such too was the complexion put upon their efforts by Dissenters themselves, up to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and the passing of the Emancipation Bill. Churchmen were assured that freedom of worship and opinion, combined with full toleration and civil privileges, was all Dissent coveted; and that instead of subverting and destroying, the aim and tendency of dissenting demands would be rather to strengthen and benefit the Established Church. Accordingly, from 1688 to 1830 the great subject of debate in matters ecclesiastical was the Test and Corporation Acts, passed in the reign of Charles II. And the line of argument adopted by those favourable to their repeal, leads to the conclusion that the object sought was an extension of the bounds of toleration.

It was in connection with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts that we first hear of a dissenting organisation for political purposes. I refer to the "Deputies appointed to protect the civil rights of Dissenters," which deputies were selected from every Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist congregation in and within twelve miles of London. Originating in 1732, this organisation is still existing, composed of the self-same ingredients as in 1732, and

equally energetic in its mission. A great change indeed has come over its programme and policy, but it is still what it was 130 years ago, the faithful representative of the three denominations of "orthodox Dissenters." The area of civil rights, according to dissenting theories, has been vastly extended since the first selection of Deputies in 1732. What are now demanded as such, were not found in the original category of the Deputies: but the successive changes that have occurred in the views and designs of political Dissent, can nowhere be more truthfully portrayed than in the history of that Association. In 1732, the Deputies limited their civil rights to the removal of disabilities. In 1832, just a century after, civil rights comprehended the separation of Church and State; and since 1844, under the same term is included the political equality of every adult citizen. Confining, however, their exertions, in the first place, to the one object of abolishing civil disabilities, there can be no hesitation in attributing much of the success of 1828 and 1829 to the exertions of the Deputies. In the former year the Test and Corporation Acts were finally swept away, with the connivance if not complicity of the Wellington Ministry. "For the security of the predominancy of the Established Church," however, Sir Robert Peel insisted upon the following declaration being

substituted for all persons holding office under the Crown, and for municipal functionaries.

"I, A. B., do solemnly and sincerely, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, upon the true faith of a Christian, that I will never exercise any power, authority, or influence which I may possess by virtue of the office of , to injure or weaken the Protestant Church, as it is by law established in England, or to disturb the said Church, or the bishops and the clergy of the said Church, in the possession of any rights or privileges to which such Church, or the said bishops and clergy, are, or may be by law, entitled."

This declaration I shall have occasion to notice hereafter. For the present, therefore, I am content to place on record Lord John Russell's view of it, in 1828, which was expressed as follows:—"After deeply considering the declaration proposed by the Right Hon. Secretary, I feel bound to say that I do not find that it imposes any restraints on the religious liberty of individuals. It merely restrains them from exercising any influence which they may obtain by virtue of any office to which they may be appointed, to weaken the Established Church, or to subvert its legal rights and privileges. I, therefore, am of opinion, that it would be extremely unadvisable in me to propound or maintain any objection to

the declaration which has been proposed. On the contrary, I feel that it would be extremely wrong in me not to admit it into the Bill, as a very essential means of pacifying the country on this most important subject."

In 1829 the same ministers brought forward and carried the Emancipation Bill. Thus the expunging of the last vestiges of civil disabilities from Dissenters and Romanists was the work, not only of Churchmen, but of High Churchmen and Tories—Canning, Wellington, and Peel. Some restriction indeed was reserved in the case of officials appointed by the Crown and municipal functionaries. In the place of the sacramental test the declaration just given was substituted, by which they pledged themselves not to use their official influence to injure or disturb the Established Church. How Dissenters and Romanists have used the privileges conceded in 1828 and 1829; how, not content with the personal enjoyment of those civil liberties, they have abused them in planning and executing aggressive enterprises against both the outworks and the citadel of the Established Church, will appear hereafter.

It is quite certain, I allow, that some notorious individuals, like the demagogue Wilkes and Dr. Priestley, had proclaimed, long before 1832, that the principles and objects of Dissent went far beyond the removal

of civil disabilities, aspiring even to the disruption of the union between Church and State. But why the Liberation Society should boast of such a design being conceived and harboured by Dissenters, as body, previous to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, is something inscrutable. To conceive such an idea and conceal it, and meanwhile to get what they could under a false pretence that it was all that was required, does not set Dissent in any advantageous light.

That Dissenters confined their exertions, prior to 1830, to the abolition of civil disabilities, but at the same time meditated ulterior views, which, however, they carefully withheld from the public gaze,—such a policy were surely ignoble and base.

Yet it is the fashion in our day for Dissenters to represent the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts as the first movement in separating the Church from the State, and the passing of the Emancipation Bill as the next. We are now told, in "A Historical Review of the Progress of Religious Liberty, prepared at the request of the Executive Committee of the Liberation Society, and read at its sixth triennial Conference, on May 6th, 1862," that "the movement for the repeal of the two Acts, which only succeeded in 1828, was no stealthy and disguised movement, pretended to be final, but meant

to be only initial. It was simply the politic and strategic wisdom of the movers which concentrated the dissenting force upon this first wall of defence. Everybody knew well enough that they would ask for more." Here it is implied, I suppose, that all this was known at, or before, or about the time of the events of 1828 and 1829. But how do such assertions square either with facts or probabilities? Had such confessions been circulated by the Deputies or other representatives of Dissent? Are any such to be found in the columns of the Eclectic Review, the recognised organ of orthodox Dissenters? No such intimation was ever vouchsafed on the authority either of dissenting organisations or dissenting organs prior to 1832. The very contrary, in fact, is nearer the truth.

In the year 1829 we find the Eclectic, after enumerating as grounds of remonstrance with the Church, —which list of charges, however, was considered extreme—(1.) The ordination of unsuitable candidates; (2.) The non-performance of divine service and pastoral duty in many parish churches; (3.) The non-residence of a great part of the clergy and the practice of holding pluralities; (4.) The neglect and abuse of episcopal superintendence;—we find the reviewer, I say, repeating the profession of his conviction that "a wise, undivided, persevering protest on

the part of the *Christian* people of England, against the *perversions* of ecclesiastical power which none dare to defend, would issue, and issue ere very long, in a restoration of our Church Establishment to the intention of its founders. And we dare to affirm, moreover, that *such* a restoration, even though not a phrase of the Book of Common Prayer were amended, would be followed by a reform of the national manners incalculably great. * * * * We say, if the Dissenters, generally, as Englishmen, as payers of tithes, as holders of a stake in the country, and as *Christians*, not sectarians, were thus minded and would thus act: If their steady moderation and active zeal were such as to convince statesmen that they were not to be suspected, and must not be trifled with, we do not hesitate to affirm our belief that they might accomplish the magnificent work of bringing back the Church from which they dissent, to the purity of its written constitutions. * * * * It is true that we have our objections, strong objections, against certain forms of the Church, and each of us has his list of phrases he much mislikes in her services, and of constitutions he thinks redundant. But we must all allow, *as matter of fact*, that the Church as by law established, with all her imperfections, is such that the most eminent piety may exist and flourish under her

wing. We say, *as matter of fact*, the 'dew of the heavenly grace' is not withheld from the Church as by law established; nay, is in fair proportion diffused within its precincts. The Church, it cannot be denied, professes the life-giving doctrines of the Gospel, favours every great principle rescued from Rome by the Reformers, and puts into the lips of the people a largeness of devotion unrivalled in majesty, beauty, propriety, comprehension. If the Church has its faults, faults which some may deem fatal to its perpetuity, why may not the Dissenters say of her, as David of Saul, The Lord shall smite her; or her day shall come to die; or she shall send into battle and perish; but a hand shall not be upon her? We venture then to say to the Dissenter—Forget your old and fruitless controversy with the Church; forget it till better times give you a better hope of being kindly listened to. Meanwhile use your *great influence*, without guile, without ulterior designs, for effecting a restoration of the Established Church, such as it is, to purity and efficiency. If you can do no more, desire this restoration; pray for it; speak of it to your children at home, and abroad to your neighbours, as a thing necessary and infinitely important; and whenever occasion may serve, whenever public improvements may invite you to step forward, then, with a heart

fraught with unfeigned zeal and enlightened patriotism, labour to bring it about."

Besides, the question of the day was political reform; and as Dissent was opposed to Democracy in State, so we argue from subsequent events, it was not democratic in matters ecclesiastical. So late as 1831, the Eclectic denounced "the wild and visionary schemes of the Radical Reformers, which had almost brought the very name of Reform into disrepute." In the same number, the Eclectic exclaimed, "What was really extraordinary and portentous was the rapid manner in which a particular measure, the Ballot, was at one time gaining favour with all classes of Reformers. What has Lord John Russell's Bill effected by its very announcement? We hear no more of the Ballot—an attempt to foil corruption by the resources of the slave; we hear no more of Universal Suffrage—a plan for collecting the decision of the majority, which defeats itself by its cumbrous impracticability, as well as its unreasonableness."

Later still, in 1832, the Eclectic maintained that "the tithes are no more vested in the Legislature than are the Irish estates of a London company, or the endowments of our dissenting academies and meeting-houses." In the same number, the publications of the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, on the

same subject, are not only condemned, but said to have been "very generally disapproved," the Eclectic protesting thus: "The allegation that tithe is 'an invasion of the rights of conscience,' we cannot but regard as altogether erroneous." With these views, the Patriot newspaper, which began in the early part of 1832, in its first numbers, wholly coincided.

From these quotations, only one of two inferences is permissible; either that the idea of separating Church and State had not assumed any tangible form in the mind of Dissenters, as a body, previous to 1832, or, if such an intention was generally entertained then, that it was not known, and not meant to be known; and that, therefore, it was studiously concealed and decried in the columns of Dissenting organs. Indeed, one of the greatest changes, as we shall show hereafter, effected by the Reform Bill of 1832, was its conversion of Dissent into a political faction. It transferred power from the higher to the middle classes, and to those middle classes Dissenters mostly belonged, and do yet belong. Accordingly, no sooner was it safe, than Dissenters and their organs, from a grievous exaggeration of their new powers, began to look forward to, and agitate for, the separation of Church and State, and the perfect equality of all religious sects.

The probabilities of the case all tend to the same conclusion, that such principles and objects as are now entertained by Dissent, were not propagated before 1830. Allowing that they were even entertained, expediency itself suggested the policy of suppression. It was only by concealing such ulterior aims that Dissent enlisted under its banner recruits from every political party in turn. It was only thus that at one time, Wilkes and Fox at another, Canning, Wellington, and Peel, were induced to lead its forces. Otherwise, in the events of 1828 and 1829, both those statesmen and their colleagues were acting the part either of principals or accessories to a conspiracy for the overthrow of the Established Church; and, by consequence, according even to Earl Russell, for the overthrow o the aristocracy and the monarchy of these realms.

The matter under discussion is capable, perhaps, of being best cleared up by illustration. With Earl Russell, I believe that the downfall of the aristocracy and monarchy will follow close upon the downfall of the Established Church. I believe also, that if the Established Church were overthrown, it would then be the aim of political Dissent to overthrow both the aristocracy and the monarchy. Now, we will suppose that the dust of the Established Church is given to the four

winds of heaven, as Mr. Miall so fondly anticipates, about A.D. 2000. *Quod omen Deus avertat.* Well, soon after that event, I doubt not, an agitation would be commenced against the aristocracy and monarchy.. And, within some thirty years after, I can imagine some democratic Dissenter to rise up and declare that this agitation was no new movement; that it had been again and again proclaimed in Parliament and out of it, by the Dissenters and their friends, previous to A.D. 2000; that the movement for the separation of Church and State had never been represented as final, but meant to be only initial; that it was simply the politic and strategic wisdom of the movers which concentrated the dissenting force upon this first wall of defence; and that everybody knew they would ask for more than the separation of Church and State. Would, then, such statements, made subsequent to A.D. 2000, be true of any movements now occurring? Is it really the fact, that whilst the pulling down of the Established Church is the primary object at present, the ulterior object of pulling down the aristocracy and the monarchy is a concomitant movement, and universally recognised as such?

I cannot, then, assent that, whilst aiming, prior to 1830, at the abolition of civil disabilities, Dis-

senters were also aiming at the abolition of the Established Church, and far less, that this design was generally known. Nay, I maintain that the hypothesis just now assumed, is much less of an hypothesis than this. I believe that the number of those who, in our day, secretly and openly cherish the design of overthrowing the aristocracy and monarchy, is much greater than that of those who, prior to 1830, conceived the idea of overthrowing the Established Church. The truth, however, is, that some persons greatly mistake the character and policy of political Dissent. In its very essence and nature, Dissent is aggressive. But it is fresh victories that beget a lust for fresh conquests, and suggest new fields of action and new enterprises. As, then, it would be an error to represent Dissent as avowedly bent in our day upon the rooting out of the aristocracy and the monarchy, when it confines its operations to uprooting only the Established Church so to represent Dissent as openly and avowedly committed to the abolition of the Established Church, when its efforts were devoted to the abolition of civil disabilities, is also an error, not only in fact, but in inference. Dissenting force is concentrated upon one and the first line of defence. When that is carried, new hopes and aspirations spring up, and another plan of operation is mapped

out. And thus will it ever be, so long as any lines of the British Constitution stand. For of political Dissent we may safely predicate that which is told us of Alexander, that it will only then weep when its conflicts are all over; when no more defences remain to be thrown down; and when no hope of devastation or plunder survives, because the British Constitution has been laid in ruins.

It may be that such statements as have been dealt with, impose upon the ignorant and the unwary. That they are calculated to do so, is obvious. It is thus that Dissent acquires a reputation for fair play and ingenuous candour and holy boldness. Every artifice of cunning, or disguise, or fear, is represented as foreign to the very essence and nature of political Dissent. The estimation I have formed of modern Dissent is very different, and yet it is derived from the pages of its own organs and publications. Whatever may be said of its professions, the means to give them effect are and have been dark, sinister, crooked. Previous to 1830 its first principles and objects were carefully concealed; its ulterior objects were masked till a later period, and, I suspect, are not fully confessed even yet; and certainly the same policy of suppression is still acted upon in its mode of operations, and with respect to the particular means, by which those

objects are to be realised. In every case, however, of misconception or ignorance, the blame rested and still rests with the authorities of Dissent. It was and is a part of their policy to keep up, if not to propagate, misunderstandings. But when disguise and suppression have been tried and found out, then an affectation of frankness is assumed. The virtue of candour in turn becomes a cloak for cunning. Whilst, however, imputing to Dissent a propensity to secresy and suppression, the celerity and dexterity with which, on finding its devious, clandestine courses discovered, it tacks about and steers into the open sea of candour and confession, must be regarded as truly marvellous, if not admirable.

It only remains to bring our arguments on this subject to a conclusion. Whoever they were, and whether many or few, to whom the idea of separating Church and State had presented itself previous to 1830, and whether or no that idea was the controlling medium of Dissent in 1828 and 1829, this assertion may safely be hazarded, that no traces whatever exist of such an idea in the periodicals of Dissent. Viewed from the speculum of 1864, we may allow that such was possibly the intention of Dissent—that even before the repeal of the Test Acts, that train was laid which ultimately was "to

give the dust of the Established Church to the four winds of heaven;" but I deny altogether that such an intention was professed and acknowledged at the time. As, therefore, no such principles and objects as the separation of Church and State were proclaimed, I lean to the more charitable inference that they were not generally entertained. Neither dissenting organisations nor dissenting organs professing such principles or objects previous to 1830 or 1832, it is for the credit of Dissent to suppose either that they were kept strictly in abeyance, or had never existed, even in thought or intention. And that Radicalism, or the democratic principle in civil matters, was repudiated, is abundantly clear, not only from the Eclectic Review of 1831, 1832, and 1833, but from the columns of the Patriot for 1832 and 1833, if not of later years. In fact, that Dissenters should ignore all designs of democratic encroachment either upon Church or State, prior to the passing of a Reform Bill, which they expected to confer upon them many and great privileges, was a course dictated by the most ordinary rules of sound policy. Of this, however, there can be no doubt, that soon after the events of 1828 and 1829, and particularly after the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, the time was beginning to arrive when, after "having asked for toleration as a favour,

and then, when they became more numerous, having demanded it as a right, Dissenters rejected it as an insult;" when, that is," equality having been seen to be a right, toleration had become an offence." That time I have fixed at or about the close of 1831, and, accordingly, with that year the first act of the drama, I am chronicling, is concluded.

CHAPTER II.

FROM 1832 TO 1844.

DISSENT IDENTIFIED WITH, BUT NOT ALLIED TO, DEMOCRACY.

THE former chapter brought us down to the year 1832, when, by the admission of Dissenters themselves, the enactments of 1828 and 1829 had completed the work of toleration. For a year or two after those events, Dissent remained comparatively quiescent, not agitating any ecclesiastical grievance, real or imaginary, but nevertheless not slack or dubious in its advocacy of the Reform Bill. With 1832, however, an epoch begins which, ending with 1844, I have marked as the period within which Dissent became identified with, if not actually allied to, democratic principles and democratic parties in Church and State. In this year, 1832, it is that we find the first record of Anti-State-Church dogmas set forth by authority. The doctrine was broached at a meeting of the De-

puties in January of that year. But an offshoot from that organisation, the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, was doubtless the pioneer in the Anti-State-Church movement, though it is not till May, 1832, that we find any public profession of the kind. But although both Associations, both the Parent Society of the Deputies, and its branch, the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, openly professed Anti-State-Church theories in the early part of the year 1832, it is somewhat curious that their organs in the press, the Eclectic Review and the Patriot newspaper, at first discountenanced the new crusade. It was not till the autumn of 1833 that the Eclectic admitted of the probability of the question of an Established Church being debated in Parliament, nor till 1834 that it discussed the subject in its own pages. And no sooner was the separation of Church and State shadowed forth in the dim and distant future by the Deputies, than the Patriot newspaper at once blotted out the adumbration.

The secret of that suppression does not lie very deep. The Reform Bill had not yet passed. For no sooner was it safe, than the Patriot proclaims "the time to be come for telling orthodox Dissenters that they must endeavour to obtain a larger share in the representation of their country, and that the Reform Bill, in very many places, would give them

by far the larger part of the constituency." In the same month of June, may also be discovered a wonderful change in the Patriot's ideas relative to the Established Church, for it declares "that the conscientious opposition to Establishments, AS SUCH, is becoming each day the great plea of Dissent." Soon after, the same paper informed its readers that "Ecclesiastical Reform will not tarry long, now that Political Reform has been carried." It was not, however, against the Establishment, as a whole, that it first directed the prejudices of Dissenters, but against Church Rates, assuring them that "Church Rates stood purely in the light of any other tax, and might be put on or taken off with as much ease as a tax on soap or candles," and urging them "to make some energetic efforts to shake off that infamous burden." Such language as this was never used previous to the passing of the Reform Bill, and later events confirm the belief that political Reform, even in 1832, was only the means, and what was termed ecclesiastical reform, namely, the separation of Church and State, was really the end in view in the movements of certain political Dissenters. With the meeting of the first Reformed Parliament, in 1833, those designs became more manifest.

But the better to understand what follows, I

must premise that the Liberal majority in that parliament, comprised in it no less than four great and distinct sections—(1) the Constitutional Whigs and Ministerialists, headed by Earl Grey, Lord Melbourne, Lord Althorp, and Lord John Russell; (2) the Radical, or Democratic, section to which belonged Mr. Hume, Mr. Grote, Mr. Ward, Mr. Roebuck, Mr. C. Buller, &c.; (3) the Protestant Dissenters, lead first by Mr. Wilks, then by Mr. Baines, and including also Mr. Pease, Mr. C. Hindley, Mr. Brotherton, and certain Scotch members; (4) the Irish National, or Repeal, and Roman Catholic party, over which domineered the twin geniuses of Daniel O'Connell and Mr. Sheil. The Conservative Opposition, under Sir. R. Peel, numbered little more than 150 members, the four Liberal sections together counting at least 450 members. With respect to the Whigs, deeming the Act of 1832 a final and permanent settlement, their policy was simply to "rest and be thankful." The Radicals, on the other hand, regarding the Reform Bill of 1832 merely as an instalment, pushed forward to the ballot, a large extension of the franchise, electoral districts, and triennial parliaments. As to the Dissenters, their grand object was to overthrow the Church, and mistaking probably their own strength and the disposition of Ministers, they at

first meditated destruction wholesale. With the Irish Repealers and Romanists the one great grievance, next to the Union, was the Established Church of Ireland. These three sections, therefore, it is no injustice to describe as revolutionary and democratic, alike in their principles, objects, and policy. As regards the Opposition, its mission consisted in resisting the three last sections, severally and collectively, and in conserving our ancient institutions, so wantonly assailed by the democratic forces, and so feebly defended by the Whigs. It is the mutual relations of these political parties and their different combinations that I would now trace out; an inquiry which cannot fail to guide Churchmen and Constitutionalists to a right appreciation of their position and its responsibilities. More particularly, I shall endeavour to follow, in chronological order, that thread of events which, from 1832, brought the two democratic principles of Radicalism and Dissent, including Irish Romanism, into closer and closer ties, until, in 1844, they were connected, when Dissent and Democracy became identified and united, under the auspices of the British Anti-State-Church Association.

The questions, therefore, to be discussed, are essentially what are called constitutional questions. From 1833, two species of warfare have been waged

incessantly against the British constitution,—the one civil, the other ecclesiastical. As Radicalism from the first championed the cause of the ballot, a large extension of the suffrage, electoral districts, and triennial parliaments, so the English and Scotch Dissenters, and Irish Repealers and Romanists, assailed the United Church, and especially that branch of it established in Ireland. The primary objects, then, of the three democratic factions were different, but whichever object shall be first accomplished, the judgment of every student of constitutionalist history will pronounce that it cannot be the only one, but must shortly be followed by the acquisition of all the others. This conviction it was, in all probability, which, before the year 1840, tended to unite the three democratic sections in parliament, and which, in the year 1844, established a Dissenting organisation conjointly upon the basis of Radicalism and the separation of Church and State.

Beginning, then, with the opening session of the first Reformed Parliament, the first motion to be remarked was that of Mr. Faithful, who, in April, proposed to the House of Commons a resolution to the effect—"That the Church of England, as by law established, is not recommended by practical utility; that its revenues have always been sub-

jected to legislative enactments; and that the greater part, if not the whole, of those revenues, ought to be appropriated to the relief of the nation." This motion, negatived without a division, is remarkable as being the only substantive proposal ever made to parliament which comes up to the programme of the Liberation Society. Within a fortnight, however, the leading Radicals or democrats, the Dissenters, and the Irish Romanists are found combined for the first time, to support Mr. Grote's motion, which was seconded by Mr. Ward,—"That the votes at elections for Members of Parliament should be taken by way of secret ballot." On this occasion Mr. Grote obtained only 106 votes, the Ministry opposing the motion, and Lord Althorp in its behalf, "appealing to any gentleman who was in the last Parliament, and who knew the whole proceedings while the Reform Bill was going on, whether the promoters of that measure did not contend, that, as far as the representation of the people was concerned, it was to be considered, and was proposed, as a final measure." On one subject, however, the four Liberal sections united, and that was the Irish Church Temporalities Bill, including the abolition of church-cess, which was carried by a majority of 239. Soon after, the question of Church Rates in England was mooted, Lord

Althorp admitting that "the subject was under the consideration of Government." In its review of the session of 1833, the Eclectic allows that "so far as regards the working of the Reform Bill, we think there is reason for entire satisfaction;" but complains of the supercilious tone of Ministers towards Dissenters. Still, their conduct was partly excused, on the score that Dissenters had but few champions, and only one representative in the Commons, Mr. Wilks, who is nevertheless styled "the able representative of the *millions* of orthodox Dissenters." On the whole, both the Dissenting organs, the Patriot as well as the Eclectic, declared their approbation of the session's work, but commended the Ministry rather for what was expected the following year, than for what had been already done. Conservative reform was still the watchword; Radical measures, such as the ballot, were deprecated; Mr. Hume was not a favourite; but yet the Eclectic intimated "that the principle of ecclesiastical establishments must, before long, be brought under debate," and the Patriot confessed that "the Church Rate is a matter of comparative insignificance, except as connected with the principle of the Establishment, that of a dominant Church in connection with the State." The same journal also admitted into its columns a letter signed "G. Had-

field," the present Member for Sheffield, it is presumed, insisting that Dissenters asked for too little, and that they ought to demand "a total disconnection between Church and State," and that Earl Grey's Ministry was only "temporising." It was in the autumn of this year, 1833, that Mr. Binney's celebrated address was delivered, on laying the foundation of the new Weigh-House Chapel, the last sentence of which is as follows:—"The dissolution, then, of the existing Anti-Christian alliance between Church and State is the object at which Dissenters will aim, and aim at it on serious, sacred, and religious grounds; identifying it with the honour of God, the peace of his Church, and the universal advantage of mankind." I may add, that this address was at once adopted by both the Eclectic Review and the Patriot, as an "exposition of the views and principles of orthodox Dissenters," that is, of the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, who were represented in Parliament by Mr. Wilks, and in political organisations by the Deputies and the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society. So much for the events of 1833.

The following year another sight was seen. The Political Unions, originally started to agitate Reform, were not yet disbanded, but diverted against the Church. A pamphlet, published in the course of

this year, states what appears to have been the literal truth, that "The Dissenters and the Political Unions have the same objects in view, and only make use of different means to accomplish those objects." Hence, the great Church Rate contests maintained in the large towns, but it is notorious that, although refused in Birmingham, Manchester, Rochdale, and other places, in no one case did the scrutiny of voters give the victory to the Anti-Church party. It was simply by clamour, brute force, and illegal votes on the part of a politico-religious combination between Radicals, Dissenters, Romanists, and Infidels, that Church Rates were abolished in the large towns. However, the consequence of all the agitation was greatly to elate the advocates of Dissent, who, apparently, like the Eclectic, counted themselves by millions. The whole country was convulsed, and nothing shows the spirit of Dissent better than the changed tone of the Eclectic, which, though protesting that its friends had not excited "the prevalent hostility against the Church Establishment," yet added, "the alliance between Church and State is a political alliance, and nothing more, and it is this which Dissenters wish to see dissolved, as being injurious to both parties, and in its very nature Anti-Christian." The Patriot went a step further, informing its readers that by the separation

of Church and State was meant the abolition of Church Rates, tithes, the baronial privileges of the prelates, the clerical magistrates, university tests, &c., a definition subsequently indorsed by the Eclectic. For, in answer to the query, "What is the union of Church and State," the Patriot replied:—1. The tithe system, civil and ecclesiastical—not so much the fiscal exaction as the principle. 2. The baronial privileges and duties of prelates. 3. The exercise of temporal jurisdiction by persons in holy orders, as magistrates, &c. 4. Compulsory payments levied on the members of all unendowed Churches in support of the endowed Church. 5. Exclusion from the national seminaries of education—from the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, down to the charity schools.

Earl Grey, however, was not made of that pliant mould of which modern Whigs are fashioned. On the opening of Parliament he took occasion to declare, that "he was not one of those who would, for a single moment, appear to encourage the theorists who were for separating Church and State;" a speech which not only turned the Dissenters against him, but which appears to have fanned the flame of politico-religious fanaticism. On the 13th March, Mr. Rippon moved—"To relieve the Arch-

bishops and Bishops of the Established Church from their legislative and judicial duties in the House of Peers." In seconding which motion, Mr. Gillon said, "What course his Majesty's Ministers might adopt in regard to this motion he knew not, but it was easy to guess. The measure being carried which they had looked to as a means of annihilating their political rivals, formerly in power, their motto now seemed to be 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.' No one measure of efficient and satisfactory Reform had met with their concurrence. The Church and the aristocracy were taken under their especial protection, while the people, on whose shoulders they were carried into power, were forgotten." This motion, the first of its kind, was only supported by 58 members, but among them may be enumerated every single leader of the three democratic sections. Immediately afterwards Mr. Divett introduced, but withdrew, a motion for the abolition of Church Rates, but on the part of the Government, Lord Althorp broached a scheme sketched out in the resolution, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that, from and after a time to be fixed, the payment of Church Rates shall cease and determine; and that in lieu of them his Majesty be empowered to grant out of the proceeds of the land-tax, a sum not exceeding

£250,000, to be applied to the fabric of the parish churches and chapels in such measure as Parliament may direct." This proposal was carried by 256 against 140, the majority consisting partly of Whigs and partly of Conservatives, the minority including the Radicals, Dissenters, and Irish Romanists.

It was not simply in the division lobby that the hostility of Dissent to the Government, and its proposal found vent. The Patriot openly proclaimed that "no Minister can serve two masters. Lord Grey must choose between the Church, as the patrimony of the oligarchy, and the people." It also warned Ministers that "to think of stopping short of an entire separation between the Church and the State is an idle dream." On the other hand, Lord John Russell was conspicuous by his defence of Lord Althorp's resolution, and his resistance to democratic and dissenting innovations. Mr. Hume having remarked "that his Lordship seemed to have had the bench of bishops as his advisers," Lord John Russell "felt it incumbent on him to declare his opinions in opposition to those of the honourable and learned member for Colchester (Mr. Harvey), and to the honourable member for Middlesex (Mr. Hume). The honourable member for Middlesex did not think this a question simply

affecting Church Rates. He did not disguise his views, but declared that, if the opinions of the people were prepared for such a change, he would at once bring forward a measure for the separation of the Church from the State. The Ministers acted on a totally different principle. He and his colleagues had of course little reason to expect the support on this occasion of the honourable member for Middlesex and others, whose object was to destroy." Mr. Wilks declared that "the question at issue was not one of amount, but of principle. The principle for which the Dissenters contended, was, that every man had a right to worship God according to his conscience, and that he cannot be required, consistently with justice, to contribute a doit to the support of a form of worship which his conscience condemns; and, again, they objected to an alliance of the Church and State."

Owing, however, to the opposition of Dissent and subsequent changes, Lord Althorp's proposal was ultimately abandoned. It was during this year that O'Connell's Repeal motion was introduced, the arch-agitator moving "that a select Committee be appointed to inquire and report on the means by which the dissolution of the Parliament of Ireland was effected; on the effects of that measure upon Ireland; and on the probable consequences of con-

tinuing the legislative union between both countries." This motion was supported by 38 members, all, with one exception, being Irish, and the tellers being Mr. Feargus O'Connor and Mr. Sheil. But it answered the purpose intended. It gave O'Connell an opportunity of parading the fancied grievances of Ireland, and, above all, it afforded a pretext for again attacking the Irish Church. This attack was commenced by an English Radical, Mr. Ward, who brought forward a motion to the effect, "That the Protestant Episcopal Establishment in Ireland exceeds the spiritual wants of the Protestant population, and that, it being the right of the State to regulate the distribution of Church property, in such manner as Parliament may determine, it is the opinion of this House, that the temporal possessions of the Church of Ireland, as now established by law, ought to be reduced." As in the case of Church Rates, however, the Whigs made common cause with the Conservatives against Mr. Ward's motion, which was rejected by the large majority of 396 against 120 votes.

But the motion resulted in other consequences both serious and permanent. In the first place it led to the resignation of four Cabinet Ministers—Lord Stanley (the Earl of Derby), the late Sir James Graham, the late Duke of Richmond, and the late

Earl of Ripon. In its more remote effects, it also occasioned the accession to office of Sir Robert Peel in the autumn, and his premature overthrow in 1835. Earl Grey himself resigned soon after his four colleagues, Lord Melbourne succeeding to the premiership. Previous, however, to those resignations, Mr. Tennyson had brought forward a motion for repealing the Septennial Act, which being also opposed by the Whigs and Conservatives united, was lost by 235 votes against 185. Sir Robert Peel having "declared that Lord John Russell had plainly said that it was an essential condition of the existence of an Established Church, that the State should provide for the maintenance and repair of the fabric of the Church," the following addendum is appended by Hansard "(Mr. Hume, 'No, no.' Lord John Russell, 'Yes')." Loud therefore was the dissatisfaction of the Dissenters, Radicals, and Irish Romanists with Earl Grey's Ministry. It had opposed Mr. Rippon, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Tennyson, as well as O'Connell. It had pledged itself to maintain Church Rates, or provide an equivalent, and Earl Grey had taken the first opportunity afforded him, at the opening of the session, publicly to denounce the Anti-State-Church theorists.

Dissenters, however, were not to be cowed into submission by the Whigs, who were now regarded as

no better than Tories, and as having supplanted the latter by the aid of Dissent. Accordingly, at a conference of Dissenters in London, Mr. Edward Baines, M.P., in the chair, it was resolved that "this meeting recognises the great and leading principle of full and complete separation of Church and State, as the true basis on which equal rights and justice can be secured to all classes of his Majesty's subjects." And on presenting certain petitions in favour of that separation, Mr. Gillon asserted that "he felt assured that Dissenters would continue to urge their claim to relief from the most practical of all grievances—the domination of a favoured sect; and also would continue to urge the great truth, that the Church has neither a necessary nor a beneficial connection with the State; and that, while that connection shall subsist, discussion and enmity will continue to disgrace the Christian world. The voluntary Churchman regarded the property of the Church as national property."

Accepting such sentiments as these, it can excite no surprise that the Patriot had complained of Earl Grey's Government, "Ministers have done nothing for Dissenters; the Dissenters owe nothing to Ministers." But, notwithstanding any imaginary shortcomings of Whig Ministers, the dismissal of Lord Melbourne in the autumn of 1834, roused

Dissenters to a paroxysm of rage. Much as the Whigs were disliked, the Conservatives were even less popular, if for no other reason, because the former were more amenable to democratic pressure. Besides, the Reform Bill of 1832 was considered a sure guarantee for long years of Liberal government. If, then, the Whigs proved stubborn and deaf to democratic chidings at first, the Dissenters and Democrats still hoped so to manœuvre parties, as to gain their objects in the end. They calculated that, rather than run any risk of office, the Whigs would make concessions to clamour and threats. All these calculations were baffled in a moment by a single act of regal prerogative. The arbitrament between political parties was taken out of the hands of Dissenters and Democrats in an instant, and without any reference to their wishes. During the two first sessions, however, of the first Reformed Parliament, the divisions of parties was for the most part Whigs and Conservatives, against the three democratic sections of Radicals, Dissenters, and Irish Repealers. In other words, the Whigs stood firm by their constitutional principles, and consequently found themselves generally in the same lobby with Sir Robert Peel and the Conservatives. If I were invidious enough to search out another reason for that phenomenon, it might possibly be found in the fact,

that up to 1835 the Whig party was of itself both numerous and strong, and therefore, able to defy democratic aggression.

Sir R. Peel having taken office on the dismissal of Lord Melbourne and having appealed to the country, the Whig party lost both numbers and influence. Then followed a change in its constitutional policy and the adoption of a time-serving expediency. A change came over Dissent also, or rather, the change, which had been working its way silently but rapidly during the years 1833 and 1834, began to appear more marked and palpable. Dissent, in short, began to favour democratic innovations, as well in civil as in ecclesiastical matters. It drew nearer its relations to the two parties which demanded the secret ballot, triennial parliaments, and the excision of the Irish Church, the parties of Mr. Hume, Mr. Grote, Mr. Ward, and O'Connell.

If the accession to office of Sir R. Peel, under the desperate circumstances of 1834, was fruitless of all positive results, like the accession of Lord Derby, under nearly similar disadvantages, in 1858, it indirectly led to a decisive check of the democratic principle. In each case an appeal to the country issued, not, indeed, in an absolute Conservative majority, and in a permanent retention of office, but in such an addition to the Conservative ranks, that on

the return to office of a Liberal Ministry, it was all but powerless for evil against the concentrated efforts of the Opposition. In prospect of the general election, however, in 1834, under the auspices of a Conservative government, the Patriot took up a new position. "There are such nondescript animals," it wrote, "to be met with as Tory Dissenters, nay ultra-Tory Dissenters, but their numbers are few, and the race will soon be extinct." At the same time it was not exclusive in the use of its weapons. Though committing itself to the ballot and an extension of the franchise, it also insisted upon disfranchisement. Seeing where the strength of Conservatism lay,—in the counties,—it ventured to put forth a demand for the repeal of the "fifty-pound-tenant-at-will clause," and this demand was seconded by the Eclectic. Does it not thence appear, that so early as 1835, at all events, the value of the franchise in the eyes of Dissenters was measured solely by its worth as an instrument to effect the separation of Church and State?

The Conservatives having gained vastly at the elections, the Whigs saw that their craft was in danger. But the cool retreats of opposition have more than once operated materially to change the views of the Whig party, and bring them into harmony with democratic principles. Thus was it in

1835. The very motion, which they had opposed in the previous year from the Ministerial benches, they now adopted on the Opposition seats. Lord John Russell himself championed the cause he opposed in 1834, when Mr. Ward was its leader—the cause of the famous "Appropriation Clause." And never did defter champion go forth than Lord John Russell, when he led on Whigs, Radicals, Dissenters, and Irish Romanists, to do battle against the Irish Church in 1835. In the short space of nine days he not only raised three debates, extending over seven days, but went to three several divisions. On the 30th March, Lord John Russell moved "That the House do resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to consider the temporalities of the Church of Ireland." On the 3rd April, Lord John Russell moved in committee, "That it is the opinion of this committee that any surplus which may remain, after fully providing for the spiritual instruction of the members of the Established Church in Ireland, ought to be applied locally to the general education of all classes of Christians." And on April 7th, the report of the Committee having been read, Lord John Russell moved the following resolution, "That it is the opinion of this House that no measure upon the subject of tithes in Ireland, can lead to a satisfactory and final adjustment, which

does not embody the principle contained in the foregoing resolution." Each of these motions having been carried by majorities varying from 25 to 35, or so, Sir Robert Peel retired from office, greater, however, in defeat, than Lord John Russell in victory. Previous, indeed, to Lord John's protracted conflict, Sir R. Peel had been worsted in the choice of Speaker, but it was Lord John Russell's resolutions that arrested the hopeful career of Sir R. Peel's Ministry, in 1835, as the same trickery subsequently upset Lord Derby's in 1859. On both occasions, the same results were effected by the same means—a coalition of all the Liberal sections against the Conservatives. The same consequences also attended each coalition. The "Appropriation Clause" having served the purpose of transferring the Whigs from opposition to office, its ghost was only once raised and then laid for ever. In 1859 Reform was the war-cry of Lord John Russell; and what has become of Reform since 1859? In both cases the three democratic factions reaped a rich harvest of self-inflicted, deep, and deserved disappointment.

For thirty years and upwards it has been the constant practice of the Whigs to trade upon the credulity of the Democrats. Yet with the same heedless, fatuous simplicity of confidence, the latter

still run cackling for protection to the Whigs, whenever the Whigs are unable to protect themselves. To manage such blunt, burly, uncompromising characters as John Bright, Edward Miall, and Daniel O'Connell, would require a world of trouble, it might be thought. Yet they are but as little children in the hands of the Whig giants. Neither is the system of management either difficult or diverse. It consists simply of a few indulgences to popular whims at the right time. The Democrats are humoured for a moment, to be circumvented always. What, however, appears passing strange is this, that, whenever the Whigs are *in extremis* and begin again to look up their long-lost, long-forgotten friends of the democratic ilk, the latter make haste to proffer their grateful bows and servile acknowledgments, as though they rejoiced in being patronised and abused, by the only oligarchic clique that encumbers the soil of this free country. In 1835 the union between the three democratic sections was further cemented by their joint support of Mr. Grote's Ballot motion, the same as that of 1833, which now commanded no fewer than 146 votes. Upon the subject of Church Rates, Lord John Russell still kept his first faith, whilst Sir R. Peel stated that, "had he remained in office, it was his intention to have adopted the principle of the noble

lord (Althorp), to extinguish all equivocal and objectionable charges, but to provide for the repairs of the fabric of the Church, by an annual provision to the extent of the objects contemplated by the noble lord, not out of the land tax fund, but out of the general resources of the country."

The question of the year, however, was that of the Irish Church, a question which has long enlisted the sympathy of all democratic innovators, and which promises to be a second time the chosen battle-field of the constitutional and revolutionary principles. When next the Whigs are stranded on the bleak shores of Opposition, the raft that will be constructed to make sail again, will not improbably be fitted up out of the old timbers of the "Appropriation Clause." The Eclectic of October, 1835, bears witness to the readiness of Dissenters to join in that struggle. "It is to the honour of the Protestant Dissenters of this country, that almost with one voice they have protested against the iniquities of the Irish Church Establishment." But the effect of Lord John Russell's resolutions at the time was such as could hardly fail to gratify the most ardent wishes of the hottest political firebrand of the day.

Ireland, in fact, was filled with disturbances, riots, and rebellion. The Established clergy, robbed of their tithe, denounced by the Popish priests, insulted

and persecuted in their own parishes, saw nothing but starvation and death before them. Meanwhile, O'Connell and his party menaced the Whigs in parliament, so that the Executive feared to enforce the law it recognised and represented. Anarchy reigned supreme, and the ringleader of the agitation, whilst domineering in the British parliament and in Cabinet Councils, ridiculed the craven servility of the Whigs, and added the fuel of security to the fire of sedition. Death's heads and cross bones were the ruling fashion in Ireland, but murder was mostly too boastful and disdainful to stoop to the disguise of assassination. Nor was the condition of England such as to be envied. The Irish agitator had communicated a portion of his spirit to all his associates. And among his chosen friends were all the leading Democrats and Dissenters. Both O'Connell and Joseph Hume were present, along with Mr. Wilks, Mr. Brotherton, and Mr. C. Lushington, in 1835, at a meeting of the "Protestant Society for the Protection of Civil and Religious Liberty." In fact, Papists, Protestant Dissenters, Radical Reformers, and Infidels, all made common cause on the accession of Sir R. Peel. The Church and constitution were assailed on all sides. Dissenters began to boast of taking matters into their own hands, and scarcely did a political meeting assemble, but Dis-

senting Ministers stood forth to champion the most revolutionary measures. The popular element was also in a state of frenzy, for with Reform the people had been promised blessings, wholly fictitious and illusory. In their disappointment, however, they still went after the demagogues who kept up the illusion, and who, by imputing all the miseries of the nation to the imperfections of the Reform Bill, goaded on the masses to demand larger democratic concessions. At the general election of 1835, loyalty became a by-word. The King was bearded; the Queen vilified; the Government blasphemed. In parliament, as in the country, the Conservative party alone had to confront Whigs, Radicals, Irish Romanists, and Protestant Dissenters, who, each repudiating the acts and despising the motives of the other, agreed to unite upon the Irish Church question, and so to embarrass the ministry as to cause its resignation. For, with loss of office, all the patriotism and principles of the Whigs had evaporated into thin air.

At the same time, the Dissenters proved "determined dissatisfactionists." Nothing, indeed, is more edifying than the tactics and language of Dissent about this time. At a meeting of the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society, one of the orators talked, amidst enthusiastic cheers, of *the Church*

being forced to remove her blood-stained talons from the quivering vitals of the country. At another, the chairman exclaimed of the Church, amid a universal burst of applause, "Down, down, down with the old hag!" Dissenting pulpits rang with similar ejaculations—"Down with the Church; lay her mitred honour in the dust." Sects and parties, "hateful and hating one another," merged all their private feuds in hostility to the Church. Many Nonconformists, however, finding neither peace, order, decency, nor loyalty, much less the religion of the Bible, in their own denominations,—disgusted also with the readiness of certain Dissenters to make common cause with Popery, Atheism, and licentiousness of all kinds,—withdrew themselves and returned to the Church. Among such was the Rev. M. A. Gathercole, Editor of the Churchman, who has also informed us that a few of the epithets showered down upon him, in consequence, are to be found in the following select list, which, as a specimen of Dissenting charity and politeness in the year 1835, I append. Mr. Gathercole, then, was described as an "evil-minded, scandalous libeller—frenzied partizan—lying, slandering enemy—bully—coward—high antinomian—buffoon—madman—foul, scurrilous, and truculent slanderer—poisonous, foul, and false scribbler—an apostate

and railing curate, whose name is pollution—below the common profligate and hardened infidel—actually filled up with worse than brutal malignity—worse than the profligate of the streets—the most licentious slanderer the age has produced—most depraved man that ever lived—a contemptible scoundrel—toad—viper—envenomed reptile—fool—blackguard—damnable apostate!" Such was the spirit and such the weapons of political Dissent in 1835. Were they carnal or spiritual?

Great, then, were the anticipations of Dissent when the session of 1836 dawned. But when the Whigs quietly ignored both Appropriation clauses, and Church-rate grievances, and the Ballot, furious in turn was the indignation of all the democratic factions. Perceiving themselves duped, they denounced the Whigs in their choicest phrases. Nevertheless, private members atoned in some degree for ministerial shortcomings. Mr. Rippon renewed his motion of 1834 relative to the bishops, but only to gain 55 votes. Mr. Grote, for the third time, proposed his Ballot motion, but only obtained 90 votes. In deference, however, to the growing discontent of the Democrats, Lord John Russell, late in the session, introduced an Irish Church Bill, based, indeed, upon the Appropriation principle, but considerably modified, as compared

with the original proposal. Having been still more mutilated in the Lords, this measure was ultimately dropped, doubtless to the great joy of its promoters, and from that time to this, the Appropriation Clause, by which the Whigs climbed to power and place in 1835, has slept the long sleep of oblivion.

But of all the public acts and speeches of 1836, perhaps the most singular and striking, when viewed in the light of subsequent events, was the spontaneous declaration of Lord John Russell on June 20th, to the effect, that, "His opinion upon the subject of Church Rates remained unchanged. It was the duty of the State, by means of Church Rates, or in some other way, to provide for the maintenance and repair of churches. Whatever might be the anxiety of Dissenters, they could not have been in doubt as to the opinions of the Government. Two years ago, Lord Althorp had brought in a bill on the subject, in which the principle was declared, that Church Rates should not be abolished, unless the State provided a substitute. He had never said anything inconsistent with that principle. To that principle he had adhered and to it he intended to adhere." If this statement require either comment or illustration, let it be sought in the vicissitudes of Lord John Russell's own life and opinions. Its effect in 1836

was simply to precipitate Dissent still deeper and more rapidly into the abyss of democracy. And before the echo of the words had well died away, both Lord John Russell and the Ministry were only too glad to compound for forgiveness, from the twin powers of Dissent and Radicalism. In the autumn of 1836, a "Church Rate Abolition Society" was formed. A deputation of leading Dissenters and Democrats from Birmingham, the focus at that time of all agitations against both Church and State, waited upon the Premier, Lord Melbourne, and their remonstrances were such as to extract the promise of a measure, that should fully satisfy them.

Meanwhile, the country was kept in a perpetual ferment, every vocabulary of abuse being lavished upon the Established Church and clergy. Nothing shows more clearly the complicity of ministers with Dissent than the encomiums of the Patriot. As the Church Rate Bill of 1834 alienated Dissenters from Earl Grey, so the measure of 1837 reconciled them to Lord Melbourne. Early in the year, the Patriot "called upon the Dissenters of the three kingdoms to repose confidence in the Melbourne Administration." Soon after I find the following significant intimation in the same paper: "It is with much pleasure that we inform our readers that

'The Committee for the Church Rate Abolition Society,' unanimously elected Mr. Hume to be the representative of the Society." Is anything else needed to illustrate the growing identity between Dissent and Democracy? In February of 1837, another attempt, and the last, was made to remove the Bishops from the House of Lords. Mr. C. Lushington re-introduced Mr. Rippon's motion and succeeded in obtaining 94 votes, which, as usual, comprised all the leading Radicals, Dissenters and Romanists in the House of Commons.

It was on March 3rd, that Mr. Spring Rice brought forward the long-expected ministerial measure on Church Rates, promised Dissenters in the preceding autumn. The resolution moved was as follows: "That for the repair and maintenance of parochial churches and chapels in England and Wales, and the due celebration of divine worship therein, a permanent and adequate provision be made out of an increased value to be given to Church lands by the introduction of a new system of management, and by the application of the proceeds of pew-rents; the collection of Church Rates ceasing altogether from a day to be determined by law." Considering that Lord Melbourne's Ministry was but a slightly different edition of Earl Grey's, and remembering Lord John Russell's protestation

of the previous year, the Church Rate Bill of 1837 —a mere shuffle, to put into one pocket what was taken out of the other,—contrasted with that of 1834, is something unique. This in fact is the first scene of tergiversation enacted by the Whigs, in connexion with the Church of England, but unhappily it is neither the last nor the worst of its kind. Through all the changing scenes, however, of Whig treachery, it will be found that one person always takes the principal part, and that person is Lord John Russell. It need hardly be remarked that the Church Rate Bill of 1837 called forth bitter recriminations, or, that it enlisted the hearty sympathies of all sections of Liberalism, Whigs, Radicals, Dissenters, and Romanists. Conspicuous among its opponents were Sir R. Peel, Sir F. Burdett, who, though a Whig, had the honesty to abide by his constitutional principles, Lord Stanley, and Sir J. Graham, whose speech affords, perhaps, the best antidote to the baneful renegadism of his declining years.

It may, perchance, afford some comfort to Earl Russell to find that Sir James Graham's career came nearest to his own, in all that was changeful and inconsistent. As a foil, therefore, to conscious traitors, but not as any palliation of treachery to the Church, I place on record a portion of Sir James

Graham's speech in opposition to the Ministerial proposal. "He could not for the life of him comprehend," protested the Netherby baronet, "a national church, the fabric of which was not maintained out of the national funds. He had derived a lesson from the conduct of the honourable gentlemen opposite (Ministers), which would most materially influence his mind for the future, and make him most careful how he agreed to any concession of principle, demanded on any pretended ground of local necessity. When he heard scruples of conscience urged against the payment of an impost sanctioned by law, and when he reflected on the hypocrisy and selfishness of mankind, he was convinced that, if once the plea of conscience were admitted in justification of a refusal to pay a legal tribute, all the bonds of civil society would be loosened, all safety of property destroyed, and all power of civil government at an end." That picture I shall not spoil by any touches of my own. Is it not a master-piece of perfect art?

Mr. Hume—who, it will be remembered, had been selected to represent the Church Rate Abolition Society in Parliament,—stated, that "he had been with 400 delegates representing 700 places, who fully and deliberately resolved that they should have nothing to do at present with anything but

the question of Church Rates. They had no intention to ask for anything more at the present moment. Did he mean to say they would always continue of that opinion?" Subsequently, Mr. Hume admitted "the Dissenters objected much less to the amount of Church Rates, than to the principle on which they were exacted. They considered themselves entitled to liberty and equality, and that the payment of these rates was inconsistent with that liberty and freedom of conscience which they claimed."

Sir Edward Knatchbull (referring to Mr. Hume), remarked, "The honourable member had undoubtedly let the cat out of the bag, and exposed the designs of that party he represented in that House." Mr. Hardy said, "he had on a former occasion asked the honourable member for Leeds (Mr. Baines), what was meant by the union formed among the Dissenters, unless it were the separation of Church and State. At the time he received no reply, but his question was subsequently answered by a newspaper (Leeds Mercury,) over which he believed the honourable member for Leeds possessed some influence. In that paper it was stated, that the union of the Dissenters consisted in their wishing to have certain emoluments taken away from the Established religion, and to effect that sort of separation between Church and State, which would pre-

vent any one sect from obtaining grants of public money more than another."

On a division, Mr. Spring Rice's resolution was carried, but only by 5 votes, in a House of 573 members. Accordingly, in the month of June, the proposal was formally abandoned by its promoters. One result, however, had been achieved. For the moment Dissent was conciliated, the Patriot affirming it to be unquestionably the civil duty of Dissenters to support the Government, and that "the Government demands and deserves the most strenuous exertions of all the friends of religious liberty." I may add, that a motion of Mr. Harvey for the unconditional abolition of church-rates, secured only some 60 votes. Within a week or so after which event, in the month of June, King William IV. died, in consequence of which, with a dissolution at hand, preparations were at once begun for a general election. It was at this conjuncture that Dissent took up a more decidedly democratic position than it had ever before assumed. Though reconciled to Lord Melbourne, in consideration of his conceding church-rates, it was not satisfied. In common with the Radicals and Irish Repealers, Dissenters had come to regard the Whigs as only Tories in a mask, as aristocratic and as exclusive as the Tories, and not less attached to the Church

and Constitution, but lacking the firmness, the sincerity, and the consistency of the Tories.

At the same time a demon had been raised in the country which would not be laid. The spirit that was abroad breathes forth aloud in the following declaration, taken from a dissenting journal published at the head-quarters of the agitation, Birmingham. "While we join in the general thanksgiving to the Ministry, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in particular, let us not be misunderstood as admitting that Dissenters have received a boon at their hands. They have only obtained one portion of church bondage removed. Let no one mistake the church-rate question for the Church question. The Church question is not yet mooted. But we give notice to Churchmen that, as far as we are concerned, we shall not the less earnestly seek for the total separation of Church and State, because we have got rid of church-rates. It is neither the abolition of church-rates nor the exclusion of bishops from the peerage that will content us. We require the Church of England to be reduced to what she is, one of the sects, because we believe it will diffuse a greater amount of truth and righteousness." Aggressive against the Established Church, Dissent showed itself also anti-monarchical and democratic in civil matters. A certain dissenting

teacher at Leeds, a Mr. Parsons, recommended, it is said, to his people, and in his vestry, the republican works of the infidel Tom Paine. Mr. Edward Baines, junior, of the same place, and now I believe one of its parliamentary representatives, proposed on one occasion, when addressing *his brethren*, "Three groans for the Queen." Dissenting chapels, indeed, were little better than political clubs, consecrated to the worship and service of democracy. One Independent minister was frank enough to avow, at Durham, "Our great object is to secure religious and political liberty, and for the attainment of that object, I should not scruple to unite myself with Roman Catholics, *and even with Deists*." Upon church-rates, the advice of dissenting organs was this—"Brethren, refuse the rates."

In Ireland the state of society was literally appalling. Some idea of what was occurring may be obtained from the following sharp reprimand of the Times newspaper, in the autumn of 1836:—

"We have never heard that under any shadow of pretext, a Protestant clergyman had publicly cursed from the altar any one of his parishioners for having voted how he pleased at an election, or from the altar again encouraged the rest of the congregation to pelt such voters with mud and gravel, carrying their outrages to the utmost point of inhu-

manity which could be practised without risk of legal retribution. Yet all this, and more than this, has been brought home to those Popish ruffians who disgrace the name of Christian ministers in Ireland, and who enforce upon the poor by undisguised terror, the fulfilment of the most savage and unprincipled of their own selfish machinations, against the fame, the comfort, the peace, and life, of unoffending and unprotected citizens.

"As for these men talking about their right to be on a 'level' with Protestants, while their apologists seek to wash over their crimes by the plea of their only wishing to raise their flocks to an equality with their Protestant neighbourhood, we defy one or all of their ten thousand saints to work a miracle so stupendous.

"Before they can place themselves on the same floor with the Protestant clergy, or their barbarian multitude with the Protestant laity, they must remove a few moral mountains—they must learn some regard to truth themselves, and teach their followers some better comprehension of the difference between right and wickedness. The Papists of Ireland, as a body, are one hundred years behind their Protestant fellow subjects in the growth of their intelligence, and in the capacity for freedom. Educate them—aye, it were a glorious task—but

will the priests listen to any scheme of education for their humbler parishioners, of which the tendency is to lift them above the excommunication, the delusion, the superstition level? They will not, for it would be the overthrow of the priestly power. The abuses, accordingly, which prevail in the application of the new system of Government schooling, are represented to us to be altogether fearful, and to call for the interposition of men in authority—if, indeed, those who at present answer that description were qualified for so important a duty."

But the annexed statement heightens the effect of the picture. A clergyman having proposed to effect a small insurance on his life, was informed that "the policy will except death by popular violence or assassination, *a clause which the company now always introduces in policies on the lives of the Protestant clergy in Ireland.*"

Nothing, however, shocked and disgusted Englishmen more than the impious disregard of solemn oaths exhibited by the Irish Roman Catholic Commoners, who numbered near 40 members in all. Living examples of that Popish indulgence which decrees that all oaths taken contrary to the interests of the Romish Church, are to be considered not oaths but perjuries, O'Connell and his asso-

ciates began to stink in the nostrils of many who had clamoured for Emancipation. They it was who dictated the Appropriation Clause and the Irish Tithe Bill, and yet those Popish members, on taking their seats, had sworn the following tremendous oath:—

"I do swear that I will defend to the utmost of my power the settlement of property within the realm as established by the laws; and I do hereby disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment as settled by law within the realm; and I do solemnly swear that I never will exercise any privilege to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion or Protestant government in the United Kingdom; and I do solemnly, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, that I do make this declaration, and every part thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words of this oath, without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatever. So help me God."

At the same time the Whig Duke of Bedford, so far from subscribing to aid the destitute, famishing Irish clergy, actually gave £100 to aid the arch-impostor O'Connell. By this time, indeed, Whigs, Dissenters, and Radicals were all

accounted alike in principle, so far as any principle could be imputed to the Whigs. In the one case, the principle operated rather in an ecclesiastical direction; in the other, rather in a civil direction; but all assisted each other, as well as the Irish Romanists, and played into each other's hands. The great aim of the Whigs, however, was rather to talk about liberal measures, and what was called Reform, and, by procrastination in office, to hoard up such stock as capital for the evil time of opposition. The feelings of the three democratic sections were widely different. "We want no King, we want no Lords, we want no Bishops, we want no Church," were their exclamations; and many were the longings expressed for a second Commonwealth. A loyal address to the King from Dissenters was deemed a rarity so great as to merit special commendation. And that address, from a chapel at Lewes, is mostly apologetic. "We cannot, Sire," it proceeds, "be silent spectators of the haughty and ambitious proceedings of the Dissenters generally; seeing, as we do, the Papists, the Deists, the Unitarians, and, we regret to add, many who call themselves Protestant Dissenters, all joined in one common league against what they call the common enemy, and which, by their conduct, we judge they mean the Established Church. We beg to assure

your Majesty we dare not join with infidels and those who decry the divinity of Christ, nor with those who acknowledge a foreign supremacy," &c.

The "Voluntary Church Association" was started in the year 1836, and its chairman was none other than Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham, the most bellicose of his tribe, Mr. Bright excepted, and of whom I shall have more to say hereafter. Here, however, I may remark, that Mr. Joseph Sturge considered the Dissenters had greatly erred in not going for separation of Church and State at first; but they would have no more half measures if they followed the lead of Joseph Sturge and the "Voluntary Church Association." On the contrary, the "Pastor of the Independent Church, assembling in Grove Chapel, Camberwell," handed over the sum of £58, the produce of two collections, for the benefit of the suffering Irish Clergy. But in a letter to the Editor of the Churchman he stated—"I have been censured for this expression of brotherly love by some of those Dissenters who set themselves in array against the Episcopal Church, while they join affinity with Arians, Socinians, and other infidels; yea, and with Papists, too. It appears to me the very climax of inconsistency for Dissenters to keep up a hue and cry about grievances that nobody feels, and perpetuate a clamour for religious liberty

of which nobody is deprived; while they tolerate doctrines the most awfully blasphemous, and, for discipline in their churches, set up Republicanism, to be maintained by monthly cabals. I repeat, I am a conscientious Dissenter, but I am not a Democrat, nor can I become one without first rejecting my Bible; and it is from that holy source I learn all my politics; and there I am commanded to 'be in subjection to the powers that be.'"

To prove, however, the truth of what the Eclectic Review wrote in 1832, that "pure attachment to Dissenting principles requires to be kept up in the minds of a certain class by a *keen hatred*, and now and then a *little round abuse, of the Church*," I beg to present my readers with the following flowers of Dissenting eloquence, culled from a Birmingham paper, called, on the *lucus à non lucendo* principle, I suppose, The Philanthropist, and from which I believe a previous extract was taken. "The Church of England," said the courteous and genial Philanthropist, "is a cage impure, and indeed abominable;" —it "groans under the accumulated filth of ages;" —it is "that dark and noxious thing, which in the Bible is called Antichrist;"—it is "felt as a grievance, and hated as an impostor, in England, Scotland, and Ireland;"—"the Southern Harlot;" —"the monster church;"—"Babylon;"—"that

mass of corruption;"—"the eldest born daughter of the Church of Rome;"—"nine tenths of the Church of England is pure popery;"—"it owes its origin to plunder and bloodshed;"—"the great Red Dragon;"—"Oh Babylon! when will the promised mill-stone fall from heaven on thy strumpet head, and crush thee to powder?"—"ours is a religious, and not a political hatred of the Scarlet Whore; and for that reason we classify the Established Church itself amongst the worst of the daughters of Babylon;"—"the English Jezebel;"—"black prelacy in its blackest form;"—"the very Bishops, yea, the very Archbishops know that they are engaged in a solemn deceit, and that the Babylonian pantomime of which they are the chief mummers, is too gross to delude even little children;"—"dare no one lay hold of a Bishop by the horns in these days? do prelates breathe fire and brimstone that no one dare touch them? How long are we to put up with this nuisance?"—"The Church of England seems as if it were trying to bring the faith of Christians into contempt; if we do not pull down this Babylon, England will be overrun with Atheism." Need any addition be made to that nosegay? Is the odour emitted that of toleration? Does it not rather smack of Puritan intolerance, of tyranny, and of persecution?

In anticipation of the appeal to the country, even the cautious Eclectic poured forth all its vials of wrath upon the Church, rushing headlong after the democratic faction, which for the last two sessions had expended its clamour upon the "finality" of the Whigs and the Irish Church. After "believing a State Church to be a monstrous departure from the institutions of Christ and a fearful engine of spiritual delusion and death," and denouncing "The Church of England as the stronghold of Toryism," the Eclectic of August, 1837, proceeds to point out the most expeditious means for pulling down that stronghold. What they were may be readily inferred from the quotation appended—"The defects of the Reform Bill," exclaimed the Eclectic, "must be remedied; the suffrage must be extended; protection be afforded to the honest voter by the introduction of the ballot; the duration of parliament be reduced; and some measure be adopted to bring the Upper House into harmony with the Commons." Such, together with the "Appropriation Clause," had long been the programme of the Radical section, and such was now the adopted "ticket" of Dissent. Whether the Radicals had the same object in view or not—whether, as it was adopted by the Dissenters, so the Radicals framed that programme, with the intention

of undermining the Established Church or no—we cannot tell; but nothing is more certain than that, in the opinion and aims of Dissent, such a programme, if carried out, could only result in the overthrow of the Established Church. On the opening of the second session of 1837, in the autumn, Mr. Wakley, though proposing an amendment to the address in favour of "an equitable extension of the franchise, secret voting by means of the ballot, and the Repeal of the Septennial Act," which motion was supported by no more than 22 votes, expressly disclaimed the imputation "that the Radicals were desirous of destroying the Church Establishment." I believe, however, that the Dissenters took a correct gauge of Radical measures when they concluded that such theories, if realised, must infallibly bring about the destruction of the Church Establishment. Nevertheless, Dissent still kept up the semblance of an alliance with Lord Melbourne's Government, and abstained from supporting Mr. Wakley's amendments.

But the most remarkable circumstance connected with Mr. Wakley's proposals was another vehement declaration of Lord John Russell, who protested that "such questions as that of the ballot, the extension of the suffrage, and triennial parliaments were, taken together, nothing else but a

repeal of the Reform Act, and placing the representation on a different footing," and that "it was quite impossible for him, having been one who brought forward the measure of Reform, and who felt bound by the declarations then made, to take any part in these large measures of reconstruction, or to consent to the repeal of the Reform Act, without being guilty of what he thought would be a breach of faith towards those with whom he was then acting." Such a declaration of "finality" was ill-qualified to conciliate the democrats, now more waspish than ever, in proportion as the Conservative element in the country became more and more consolidated and potential. Notwithstanding, therefore, a miserable truckling to the Irish agitator, the tenure of office of Lord Melbourne's Ministry became, year by year, more precarious; a fact quickly demonstrated on the re-assembling of parliament in 1838.

Few and evil, indeed, were the days of Lord Melbourne's second administration, and especially after the general election in 1837. Scarcely had the session of 1838 opened, when Mr. Grote renewed his motion on the ballot, and on this occasion he obtained no less than 200 adherents, all the democratic factions making common cause against the Whigs and Conservatives. The reasons for that concurrence were well put by no less a personage

than Lord John Russell, in an extract from a speech of Mr. H. Warburton, one of the most consistent Radicals of the day. Mr. Warburton had declared that "his maxim had always been to take what he could get, in order that he might obtain power to get more. Lord John Russell had stated that the ballot, universal suffrage, and triennial parliaments were so closely connected together, that if one of them were granted it would be the means of obtaining the other two, and therefore he refused all of them. Whenever the question of the shortening the duration of parliament, universal suffrage, or the vote by ballot came before the House, he (Mr. Warburton) would always support the one, that he might obtain the other; but if he were asked which he would choose first, he should say the ballot. He would do so, because he thought, when he had gained that, the inevitable consequence would be, to get all the others."

From this division on the ballot, in fact, another change came over the state of parties. The Whigs were much in the position of the hero of old, devoured by his own dogs. They resisted every democratic motion in turn, but in every instance were saved from ignominious defeat only by the interposition of the Conservatives. The latter, though not in office, were virtually in power, an

anomaly repeated only too faithfully in more recent times, particularly during the sessions of 1862 and 1863. With respect to the three democratic sections, the Irish Church had long supplied one centre of united action, and from this year, the project of a new Reform Bill, to include a large extension of the suffrage, the ballot, electoral districts, and triennial parliaments, furnished another bond of union. The question of church-rates, though raised on various occasions between 1837 and 1854, led to no important results. Enough transpired to vindicate the uniform hostility of Dissent, but no serious effort was made either for abolition or compromise. In 1838, the only motion bearing upon the subject was that of Lord John Russell for a committee upon church leases, which was carried only by the narrow majority of 11, though supported by all the four combined sections of Liberalism.

In the following year, 1839, the disaffection of the democratic factions to Government reached its height, whilst, as a natural consequence, the mutual relations between themselves became closer and closer. Early in February, Mr. T. Duncombe constituted himself the mouth-piece of democracy, by moving "That the amendment of the representative system, enacted in 1832, had disappointed the people; that it was not and could not be a final

measure; and that it was the duty of the House to take immediate steps towards its further improvement." To which Lord John Russell replied, "When the Reform Bill was proposed by Lord Grey and by Lord Althorp, it was proposed as a permanent settlement of the question. We, as a Government, think it right to stand by the declarations of Lord Grey and Lord Althorp." Nevertheless, Mr. Duncombe's motion commanded the support of 88 votes. A similar motion was subsequently introduced by Mr. Hume, "that the House should resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, for a reconsideration of the Reform Bill." On this occasion Mr. Hume "repeated that the suffrage might with perfect safety be extended more than he had proposed, that he had abstained at this time from proposing more than household suffrage, but thought that the personal rights of persons ought to be attended to and represented, as well as the rights of property." Mr. Hume, however, only found 51 members to agree with him. Apparently, the great question of the day was the ballot, many doubtless regarding it in the same light as Mr. Warburton, as an instalment, the easiest to get and the best calculated to entail all the other consequences of universal suffrage, electoral districts, triennial parliaments, separa-

tion of Church and State, and Universal Democracy. When, therefore, Mr. Grote's motion came on again, in June, it obtained the large number of 218 votes.

But this session terminated for a while the long series of struggles in Parliament for democratic changes. With 1839 the first long democratic campaign virtually closed. Barren of all other results, it had superinduced a complete accord between the Radical, Dissenting, and Irish Romanist sections. On the other hand, the repeated combinations of Whigs and Conservatives to resist them, had begot a suspicion of something approaching a coalition, between the two constitutional parties. The country, however, exhibited unmistakeable signs of weariness and disgust, not only at the conduct of the Democrats, but at the Ministry. This was the period when O'Connell's star attained its zenith, and Lord Melbourne was not the man to enter the lists against such an adversary. Naturally, therefore, the eyes of people were turned towards Sir R. Peel and the Conservatives, as the only barrier against Whig imbecility and Democratic violence. Accordingly, effective means were adopted for restoring Sir R. Peel to office, whenever another general election came round. Loyal and Constitutional Associations, and other organisations, were

formed in the constituencies. Registration was also attended to, and every other preparation made for turning the day against all the four Liberal factions together, and elevating Conservatism to that pinnacle it had occupied so long, previous to the Reform Bill of 1832. On the other hand, Dissent suffered, not only from depression, but from a want of effective and well-concentrated organisation. This is plainly confessed in the pages of the Eclectic, which, however, still consoled and deluded its readers with the phantasies of "Household Suffrage and the Ballot." As in 1864, so in 1840, the powers of Democracy, either from weariness or exhaustion, took a respite from their labours of destruction.

Mr. Duncombe championed in 1839 a forlorn hope against an individual grievance, self-inflicted, connected with church-rates, and in 1840 he moved to relieve Dissenters from the charge. This motion was opposed by Lord John Russell, who said, "all that he was at present prepared to do was to provide that some bill should be introduced to Parliament, proposing that the remedy for non-payment of church-rates should, in the first place, not be by summons to the ecclesiastical courts. He did not think these were the proper places in which the remedy should be sought, because he considered the

payment of church-rates to be entirely a civil payment, and that the ecclesiastical courts were therefore not the proper tribunals to interpose, but ought to be excluded from enforcing the payment of church-rates. He thought also, that as it was a civil payment, the remedy ought not to be against the person, but against the goods. That was usually the way, he believed, in which the payment of tithes was enforced, and he thought church-rates ought to be recovered in the same manner." Infirm of purpose to do good, did that conception of Lord John's go the way of all his other constitutional theories?

But nothing shows more clearly the position of parties and party questions, than a speech of O'Connell's, delivered in Dublin, though quoted by Lord Stanley in the House of Commons: "I am for a reform of the House of Lords," exclaimed the agitator, "and as a means of obtaining that end, I am for universal suffrage; I am for the ballot, and doing away with property qualifications; I am for the Whigs, although they don't go the whole way, but when I get them to a certain point, I will bring them the rest of the way with me." This estimate of the Whigs was shared in by the Democrats of all grades and all denominations. They were universally distrusted alike by Churchmen and Conserva-

tives, and by Radicals, Dissenters, and Romanists. What the Annual Register of 1841 stated, was the general opinion: "The sands of the Whig party were well-nigh run out. They had never possessed the confidence of the Church, and the large and influential body of the clergy was decidedly against them. Even the extreme section of the Liberal party, the more violent Radicals, had ceased to place any confidence in the Whigs. The doctrine of 'finality,' as asserted by the latter, was wholly repudiated by them, and numerous occasions had occurred of late, in which the Whig party had been spared the ignominy of being defeated by their Radical allies, through the intervention of the Conservatives."

No more conclusive evidence could be adduced of the change that had taken place in parliament and the country, than a speech of Mr. Darby. Speaking on the vote of confidence proposed by Sir Robert Peel in 1841, he thus sketched the decline and fall of the Whigs: "The Reform Government in 1833 had a majority of 300; in 1834, of 150; in 1835, of 50; in 1836, of 50; in 1837, of 30; in 1839, that majority had dwindled down to 10; and in 1840, in 11 divisions, which were stigmatised as party divisions, her Majesty's Government were eight times in a minority; in the present year

they had been beaten three times out of four, and on the last occasion, by a majority of 36." The upshot is well known. Sir Robert Peel's motion of want of confidence was carried by one vote; Lord Melbourne appealed to the country; but the amendment to the address in August, was carried by no less than 360 votes against 269. Thus ended the chequered reign of Liberalism, within ten years of the passing of the Reform Bill, which had been advocated by the Whigs as a sort of perpetual lease of office, and by the Democrats as the firstfruits of a revolutionary harvest both in Church and State. It is, however, in this year that we first meet with Mr. Sharman Crawford, M.P. for Rochdale, and the first recognised representative of that union between Radicalism and Dissent which circumstances had long favoured, and which, subsequent to the general election of 1841, the necessity of mere existence confirmed and ratified. But his first proposal shadowed forth the disasters of his parliamentary career. Having ventured to move an amendment to the address in favour of an extension of the suffrage, vote by ballot, and other such measures, his rashness scared many of his friends, only 41 members remaining to vote for his amendment.

But previous to the events just recorded, another

had occurred, of great consequence in our future speculations. I refer to the establisbment of the Nonconformist newspaper, which started in April with the polemical motto, "The Dissidence of Dissent, and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." From the first, its mission was explicit and decided. "This will constitute the primary object of the Nonconformist,—to ply men with every motive which ought to prevail upon them to come forward and combine to act for an equitable and peaceful severance of Church and State; this is the great design of the projectors of this paper. They have no other object, pecuniary or otherwise, to serve." Such was the announcement which ushered to the light the Nonconformist newspaper. Hereafter I shall take occasion to discuss its general principles, objects, and policy, and its connection with civil and ecclesiastical organisations—with the "National Complete Suffrage Union" of 1842, and the "British Anti-State-Church Association" of 1844. The founder, or at least the editor and conductor, of the Nonconformist, and now the proprietor as well, is, as is well known, Mr. Edward Miall. At the time, however, to which I refer, the origin of the Nonconformist, in 1841, he was styled the *Reverend* Edward Miall, and was minister of an Independent chapel, I believe, either at Ware

or Leicester. But Mr. John Bright sat by the cradle of the Nonconformist, if he did not also furnish that valuable article. This fact is somewhat suggestive, when taken in connection with disclosures to be brought forward in the next chapter, but I shall allow Mr. Bright to speak for himself. At a meeting, then, in 1862, summoned for the purpose of presenting Mr. Miall with a service of plate and £5,000, Mr. Bright thus referred to his relations with the Nonconformist: "I think in the month of September next, it will be twenty-two years since Mr. Miall was at my house in Rochdale, with a view to ascertain how far it was likely that a journal like the Nonconformist, would succeed. And I had the pleasure on that occasion of discussing the question with him, and of calling upon some of my friends and neighbours to contribute to a fund, upon which the Nonconformist was then started. From that time to this I have enjoyed the friendship of Mr. Miall." Bearing this statement in mind, my readers will go along with me more cheerfully through the events of the next chapter.

Having premised thus much with regard to the Nonconformist newspaper, I shall now proceed to the parliamentary history of 1842 and 1843. On the 21st April, 1842, Mr. Sharman Crawford, at the instance of the National Com-

plete Suffrage Union, just established in Birmingham, proposed a motion for carrying out its programme, which, embracing as it did the "elective franchise to every citizen of twenty-one years of age, the ballot, equal electoral districts, annual parliaments, abolition of the property qualification, payment of all legal election expenses, and a reasonable remuneration to members of parliament," differed but little from what was called the National Charter. No wonder that Sir James Graham, at the time Home Secretary, maintained that "the real practical question which this subject involved, was neither more nor less than this—what should be the form of government under which they were henceforth to live? If this system of representation were to be established, he was satisfied that the limited monarchical form of government under which they now lived, would not survive a century." However, Mr. Crawford was followed into the lobby by some 68 supporters. In due and natural sequence followed a motion of Mr. T. Duncombe's, "That the petitioners of the National Petition" (Charter of six points) "be heard by themselves or their counsel at the bar of the House." On this motion the ayes were 49, and on a similar motion being renewed in the same year, the ayes were 48, but among those figured all the leaders of each of

the three democratic sections. Mr. Duncombe protested that "everybody believes that this House is more corrupt, more dishonest, more disposed to what is called class legislation, than even the notoriously and avowedly venal House of Commons as it existed before the passing of the Reform Bill."

In due and natural sequence, again, to the above, I find that Sir J. Easthope soon after introduced a Church-rate Abolition Bill, a reproduction of that of 1837, which obtained 82 supporters. On this occasion, Mr. S. Crawford distinguished himself in his character of Iconoclast as regards the Church. Speaking in behalf of Sir J. Easthope's motion, he frankly declared that "the question in his opinion really at issue, was the connection of Church and State; whether there should be a Church Establishment in England paid by the people, or not. If there ought to be a Church by law established, it had a right to church-rates. If it had a right to tithes, it had a right to church-rates." Lord John Russell, however, "thought that the proposal made by Lord Althorp, in the name of Lord Grey's Government, to provide a substitute for church-rates out of the public revenue, would be a far better arrangement than the present law." Daniel O'Connell even showed him-

self less violent and arbitrary than Dissenters of our day, for he declared in 1842, that "no one asked for a law to prevent those who chose, from paying church-rates." But the Liberation Society of 1864, actually proscribes Churchmen from paying church-rates to support their own churches!

In June, Mr. Ward re-introduced Mr. Grote's motion for the ballot, but with less success, the ayes being 159. It was in this year also that what was called the Monster Petition was presented by Mr. T. Duncombe, in favour of the National Charter, signed, as it was pretended, by some 3,320,000 names. A monster procession was also organised to present the petition, and numerous banners flouted the air. The mottoes selected were alike pathetic and plain. On one banner, a black one, was written, "Murder demands justice!" Others, not black, I presume, were emblazoned with such scrolls as "The Sovereignty of the People," "Universal Suffrage" (not the same thing), and by the strongly alliterative and antithetical, but not romantic, "More Pigs and less Parsons!" Chartism, in fact, had all but reached its grand climacteric in 1842. Those who founded the Complete Suffrage Union could hardly take exception to the National Charter. If we compare, indeed, the six points of the National Charter with the six points of the

National Complete Suffrage Union, we may well be excused for not discovering any sensible difference: so marked were the common features, the former only comprising *universal* suffrage, the ballot, equal electoral districts, annual parliaments, abolition of the property qualification, and the remuneration of members. The two charters, therefore, were at least twins. That Mr. Sharman Crawford, indeed, had a considerable share in the parentage of both, will be shown in the next chapter. Accordingly, it will fall to my lot to recount hereafter, how the great organs of Dissent, the Eclectic Review and the Nonconformist, as well as Dissenting Ministers and the great men thereof, coquetted with the nascent charms of Chartism. Meanwhile, I hasten to speak of the events of 1843. The indefatigable Mr. S. Crawford again appeared with "a Bill to secure the full representation of the people," &c., and Mr. Trelawny (*infaustum nomen*), whilst opposing the motion, still admitted "that he was favourable to a considerable extension of the suffrage and triennial parliaments." On this occasion Mr. Crawford's followers amounted to no more than 33. As a contrast to previous motions on the same subject, we may note that Mr. Ward, who was now the champion of the ballot as well, only succeeded in obtaining a "count-out" on re-intro-

ducing the Irish Church question. He was, however, supported by the Mr. Trelawny just mentioned, who of late years has been better known as Sir J. Trelawny.

The autumn of 1843 was marked by the first practical steps taken to inaugurate the British Anti-State-Church Association. In this movement, no less than in the National Complete Suffrage movement, Mr. Miall and the Nonconformist took the initiative, as will be set forth at length in the next chapter. Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that Dissenting organisation had been wholly neglected previous to the founding of the Anti-State-Church Association. On the contrary, the Deputies first appointed in 1732, and whose anti-state-church confession of 1832 we have already noticed, not only existed to welcome the advent of the British Anti-State-Church Association, but are still a power among Dissenting organisations. The Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society was likewise busy between 1830 and 1844 in publishing many Anti-State-Church tracts. In 1831 or 1832, the Congregational Union was established. There was also a "Voluntary Association" in Scotland, which directed and fostered the agitation in Edinburgh against the Annuity Tax. Besides all which there sprung up in England, in 1836, "A Church-Rate Abolition Society,"

and what was called the Evangelical Voluntary Church Association, mentioned before, which had a monthly organ, the Voluntary. With the exception of the Deputies, however, and the Congregational Union, the whole were merged, I believe, in that more ambitious organisation established in 1844, by the title of the British Anti-State-Church Association.

This chapter I shall conclude with a brief recapitulation of the results arrived at between 1832 and 1844. Whatever might be the designs of Dissent previous to the Reform Act of 1832, and though in the early part of that year the separation of Church and State was on more than one occasion proclaimed to be its ultimate aim, nothing is more certain than that such an object and all opinions leading to it, were rigidly discouraged and suppressed by the recognised organs of orthodox Dissenters, the Eclectic Review, and the Patriot newspaper. With the Reform Bill, a Whig Ministry, and an overwhelming Liberal majority in 1833, Dissent conceived hopes to which it had before been a stranger. Mistaking its own strength and the policy of the Whigs, the work of Church destruction was planned on a wholesale scale. In 1834 Earl Grey resisted alike the unconditional abolition of Church Rates, and the secularization of the Irish

Church's revenues, and immediately forfeited the confidence of Dissenters. Meanwhile, another crusade was going on in another quarter. In opposition to the Whigs, who swore by the Reform Bill of 1832, as a final measure, a noisy, pertinacious faction rose up, with the various names of Reformers, Radicals, and Democrats, who viewed that measure simply as the first of an interminable series of Reform Bills, to cease and determine, nobody knew when or where. With a persistency that reached to blind obstinacy, the Radicals year after year, first under Mr. Grote and then under Mr. Ward, forced on the secret ballot, just as Mr. Berkeley now persists annually with his hum-drum show. It was not till after the accession of Sir R. Peel in 1834, that Dissent went over to unmixed Radicalism. That event proved equally disastrous to the principles of the Whigs. Momentarily, at least, it converted them into champions of the Appropriation principle. Their simulated apostasy regained the support of all the three Democratic factions, and the Whigs returned to power in 1835. But the Appropriation Clause was immediately discarded, to the great indignation of the Democrats, who never afterwards forgave Whiggism its profligate temporizing. For, from 1834 even, the Irish Church constituted the great bond of union and common

action between the Radicals, Dissenters, and Irish Repealers.

In the autumn of 1836, a temporary alliance was again patched up between the Whigs and Dissenters, the tie that held together the precarious union being none other than the unconditional abolition of Church Rates. The Ministerial measure of 1837, however, having miscarried, Dissent rushed headlong into the open arms of Democracy; and during the sessions of 1838, 1839, and 1840, all Democratic measures, whether appertaining to the Church or State, were supported by a combination of Radicals, Dissenters, and Irish Romanists, as they were opposed by the united votes of the Whigs and Conservatives. For, notwithstanding the falling off in 1837, up to 1859 the Whig party consistently opposed the unconditional abolition of Church Rates, as well as the Ballot, and all other schemes of Radical or organic Reform. The Appropriation Clause, as was before observed, had been dropped in 1836. Still it must be remarked, that the ultimate objects of Dissent were ecclesiastical rather than civil. On ecclesiastical grounds, Dissenters alternately supported and abandoned, first Earl Grey, and then Lord Melbourne; alternately denounced and caressed Mr. Hume and the Radicals; insisted sometimes upon Disfranchisement, sometimes upon

Enfranchisement; now opposed, and now advocated, the Ballot, new Reform Bills, and Democratic innovations generally. On what other grounds is the uniform ruthless hostility of Dissent to the Irish Church to be accounted for? Besides, the real designs of Dissenters appeared in their first efforts, directed plainly and immediately in 1833 against the union of Church and State; and in the three motions of 1834, 1836, and 1837, for expelling the Bishops from the House of Lords.

This, then, was the end of Dissent,—the destruction of the Established Church,—and the only end kept steadily and perpetually in view. Its civil and party relations were simply means to that end, and therefore variable. At the close of 1843, indeed, the principles and objects of Dissent were the principles and objects of the British Anti-State-Church Association combined with the principles and objects of the National Complete Suffrage Union. But it was the policy of Dissent to procure the objects of the latter before, though as subsidiary to, attaining the objects of the former organisation. The Reform Bill of 1832 having proved a delusion and a snare to Dissent in its *coup d'église*, another and a more Democratic measure was demanded, which, it was hoped, and with better reason, would ultimately bring about that consummation so devoutly desired.

And it was because the principles and the policy of the Conservatives interposed an insuperable barrier to the designs of Dissent, that, from first to last, Dissent was opposed constantly, and without intermission, to Conservatism. As the result of events between 1832 and 1844, by debates and divisions in Parliament; by organisations without, acting in concert; by kindred agitations in the country; by the concordant testimony of its press—the Eclectic Review, and the Patriot and Nonconformist newspapers—; by a participation in the same dark, ulterior counsels; by harbouring the same suspicions and mutual sympathies; by a common hostility to the British Constitution, though at first with somewhat different and distinct fields of action,—the Democrats assailing the civil, and Dissenters the ecclesiastical institutions—; lastly, by a communion of struggles and risks encountered, Dissent became identified with, if not allied to, Democracy; and the British Anti-State-Church Association, in 1844, established that alliance, if it were not contracted before. To sum up all, as at the conclusion of the former chapter, toleration was admitted to be complete, but Dissenters began to insist upon the perfect equality of all religious sects; so, at the close of 1843, we find Dissenters asserting a new claim to the perfect

equality of all mankind; in civil rights. Thus wrote the Nonconformist in its first number for 1844: —"These two truths—the equal rights of man in political affairs, and the exclusive responsibility of man to God in spiritual affairs—will be the pole star by whose clear light we shall pursue our career."

CHAPTER III.

FROM 1844 TO 1859.

DISSENT BOTH IDENTIFIED WITH, AND ALLIED TO, DEMOCRACY.

THE course of events, and the obligation of a pledge, have now brought me to a standpoint whence we can best command a view of that Association which, in 1844, united in unholy wedlock the two powers of Dissent and Radicalism, the representatives of the democratic principle in civil and in ecclesiastical matters, in the State and in the Church. But for the origin of that Association, a complete insight into its principles and objects, and thorough appreciation of its policy, it will be necessary to revert to the source whence it sprang. That was none other than the Nonconformist newspaper, which, as I have before intimated, was started in the spring of 1841. Most Churchmen have heard something of the Nonconformist Sketch-Book, but few have either seen or heard of a series

of publications known as the Complete Suffrage Tracts. Both the Sketch and the Tracts, however, may claim one and the same parentage. Both appeared originally, side by side, in the pages of the Nonconformist, and contemporaneously, during the years 1841 and 1842. As indicated by their respective titles, the Sketch-Book treats of ecclesiastical matters chiefly; and the Suffrage Tracts, for the most part, of purely political questions.

As specimens of the Sketch-Book, space forbids to quote beyond what is necessary to my purpose; but nothing is more apt or pertinent than Mr. Miall's contrast between State churches and Democracy; his identification of the Established Church with the aristocratic principle, in opposition to Dissent and the democratic principle. Here, then, I present my readers with certain chief articles of Mr. Miall's creed, in their pure unadulterated essence:—

"An image carved with marvellous cunning, tricked out in solemn vestments; a part woven by human fancy, a part stolen from the chest of truth —an image, we repeat, an outside semblance, a counterfeit of life, not God-created, but made by the hands of man; empty, without heart, destitute of any well-spring of vitality—has been placed by aristocratic legislation in the throne of Christianity." Page 27. * * "Men talk of the amazing,

the all but irresistible, power of the aristocracy. The power of the aristocracy! Let Dissenters dare to look it in the face, and it will cease to be frightful." Page 32. * * "The Establishment, be it borne in mind, is backed with the affections of few but those directly or remotely interested in its wealth. Upon the great mass of the people it has no hold. The millions would hail separation as an act of justice towards themselves. The power of the aristocracy would find no fulcrum there." Page 33. * * "A great aristocratic imposture." Page 34.

"The whole system is looked at as an engine admirably adapted to work out the purposes of an aristocracy." Page 54. * * "The real 'lion in the way' is the aristocracy. The State Church is peculiarly theirs." Page 61. * * "The State Church constitutes the solid buttress of aristocratic influence." Page 65. * * "Our present object is simply to exhibit the Church as a piece of political machinery, plied by the aristocracy for their selfish purposes." Page 66.

"The Established Church may constitute a very efficient arrangement for promoting aristocratic ends, but how it is adapted to serve Christianity, requires more ingenuity than we profess to discover. As a system for pensioning off supernumerary members of lordly houses, it may be considered

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perfect. As a means of supporting religion, it is destitute of even the semblance of fitness." Page 68.

"Fifteen thousand clergy dependent on the one hand, and powerful on the other—to the aristocracy pledged servants, to their own flocks supreme dictators—stationed at convenient intervals over the length and breadth of the land, and thus coming into contact with society at all points: could mechanism more fatal to religion, or more serviceable to the interests of the upper classes, be framed and put together?" Page 69.

"The State Church is upheld by the aristocracy —it is subservient to their designs—it shields and secures their interests. It is a political organ brought to bear against the liberties of the people. It desecrates religion—it obstructs popular freedom —it perplexes every question of civil government— it is a confirmed rheumatism to the State." Page 70. * * "The clergy have taken active part against the people in every great political struggle, from the Reformation downwards. They have on all such occasions allied themselves with the tyrant." Page 75. * * "The system has its basis in physical force. The germ and essential principle of war is the inmost core of it." Page 84.

"The State Church is still found the active friend of those who range themselves against the

liberties and the happiness of the people." Page 92. * * "An Established Church is built upon the ruins of mental freedom." Page 106.

"The Established Church has been and is the creature of Oligarchy, receiving sustenance at its hands, and evincing in return a thorough subservience to its will. Correctly speaking, the State Church and Aristocracy are one and the same thing. They are twin branches of the same root. They have flourished, and but for ignorant intermeddling, will decay together." Page 117. * * "The natural antagonism between the principle of Democracy and the principle of a Religious establishment." Page 118.

"Democracy is a reality ; a State Church is a mere conventionalism : reason animates the one, the other can live only in the absence of reason : the former is a sincerity, a vital, glowing, earnest sincerity ; the other a semblance only, a form, a disguise, a falsehood, having designs which it dares not avow, and avowing designs which it never had ; light is the congenial element of Democracy, close investigation its habit—a State Church flourishes best in darkness, is then most perfect when in juxtaposition with the least intelligence, and denounces that prying curiosity which might one day be induced to examine her pretensions. The

two things cannot co-exist, cannot run in couples; the one will assuredly strangle the other, and possibly both may perish in the struggle." Page 118.

"Liberal statesmen are the parents of Democracy." Page 119. * * "Let them, if they will, regard the separation of Church and State as, under existing circumstances, impracticable—Democracy will know hereafter how to deal with that." Page 119. * * "We have identified the Church as the mere tool of aristocracy, which has been in all times past, and is at the present moment, handled with terrible effect against the liberties of the people." Page 120.

"The question of a State Church is not one of creeds, but of patriotism. It belongs not to denominations, but to subjects of the realm." Page 278.

Such was a portion of the Anti-State-Church Catechism drawn up by Mr. Miall, and inserted in the Nonconformist, for the instruction of neophytes. That was the teaching of the Nonconformist Sketch-Book, which contained other matter equally interesting, but not so closely connected with the subject in hand. Let us now turn to the Political and Complete Suffrage articles which appeared at the same time, and were designed as a manual and exposition of civil duties. The dates appended refer to the Nonconformist:—"If to learn by hard

experience that the Reform Bill was a great political falsehood, serving only to

> 'Palter with us in a double sense,
> And keep the word of promise to our ear
> But break it to our hope,'—

if this be reaction, it has set in like a spring-tide." April 14, 1841. * * "A Tory Dissenter is a mystery." June 23, 1841. * * "Above all, we trust they will stand clear of Whig influences. Let them not repeat the mistake which ruined the Radical party four years ago." July 14, 1841. * * "The educational suffrage theory is a fallacy greatly dangerous, because very specious." July 28, 1841. * * "The result of the recent general election demonstrates that the aristocrats, both Whigs and Tories, fear nothing so much as the extension of the democratic principle into the government. The Whigs are aristocrats at heart, and if they could only do without the Radicals, they would cut the people — they care not for the people, but for place." August 4, 1841.

"The advent of Sir R. Peel to power, is the commencement of a new era in the progress of Reform — the setting in of political winter." * * "Mr. Wakley ventured to render himself ridiculous (in 1837), by giving in the name of the Radical body the most high-flown and extravagant professions of

attachment to the throne, and declaring their sincere affection for the Established Church. Did the honourable member speak for Mr. Roebuck and Sir W. Molesworth? Well, when avowed Radicals of the first water go out of the way to express affection for an institution thoroughly Conservative in all its tendencies and all its acts,—which lives and moves and has its being in Toryism,—we take leave to set them down as either ignorant of their own principles, or false in their profession of them." Sept. 1, 1841. * * "With the aristocratic principle as such, will the next serious struggle probably be." Sept. 15, 1841. * * "The democratic principle is spreading. The democratic principle means a government proceeding from and controlled by the people. It does not involve the form of government but its source." Sept. 15, 1841. * * "The people is the only source of legitimate power—this is the democratic principle." Sept. 29, 1841.

"The choice lies between democracy and aristocracy, between the rights of the many and the privileges of the few. Compromise is now out of the question. Of one or both of them the time is come." Oct. 13, 1841.

"The suffrage a right." October 20, 1841. * * "Political power and personal independence must stand or fall together." Oct. 27, 1841. * * "Rights

belong to man, and not to property. We cannot see how the party who adopt household suffrage, can hesitate in extending the right in all its entirety to the people. Let us have Complete Suffrage in preference to any compromise." Nov. 8, 1841. * * "What shall we agitate for? We believe that whenever Complete Suffrage shall have been obtained, we shall possess a guarantee for most of the advantages which legislation can secure to us. Let us have Complete Suffrage; electoral districts, and ballot, and all substantial reforms would follow as a matter of course." Nov. 10, 1841. * * "The question of Complete Suffrage is now fairly planted in the public mind. It lives, it grows, its roots have taken hold upon the soil." Dec. 22, 1841.

Such were the first lessons of that new creed inculcated by the Nonconformist. And, as with every other new prophet, Mr. Miall's first efforts were devoted to the instruction of his disciples. Accordingly he started out with certain tangible, dogmatic principles, the basis of which was Democracy in Church and State. In Church, the democratic principle of Mr. Miall was the perfect equality of all sects; in other words, the separation of Church and State. In the State, the democratic principle of Mr. Miall was the perfect equality of man; in other words, the right of every

adult citizen, as a man, and independent of all such accidents as property, education, or character, to the suffrage. But the policy of the Nonconformist subordinated the former to the latter principle, in regard to the time of its application. Complete Suffrage was to be obtained first, for it was regarded as a guarantee for the ballot, electoral districts, and, indeed, all other "substantial reforms," including that of disconnecting Church and State. In this respect the lessons of parliamentary history between 1832 and 1841 had doubtless left a deep impression upon the mind of Mr. Miall. In fact, the Nonconformist only began where parliamentary struggles had left matters in the year 1840. Dissent and Radicalism were already ripe for an alliance, having co-operated in many a fierce parliamentary encounter against the constitutional Whigs and Conservatives. But whilst the Nonconformist breathed only a distrust of the Whigs, it taught its readers to hold Conservatism in abhorrence, as utterly and necessarily opposed to Democracy, both in Church and State. Another great feature of Mr. Miall's system was the motives by which he sought to work upon his disciples. In all things, the pretext of religion was freely employed; in pulling down the Church, in advocating Complete Suffrage, in denouncing his opponents,

in invectives against lukewarm friends. As with Mahomet and his crusade, the alternative for Dissenters was either conversion or the forfeiture of life, or something dearer. Hence those terrible fulminations directed against Dissenting Ministers, and scattered about liberally in the Nonconformist Sketch-Book. Having then, in the year 1841, relieved his mind, and in no niggard measure, of what tenets, as the High Priest of a new *régime*, Mr. Miall deemed it incumbent upon him to propagate, his next object was to reduce these theories to practice. In 1842, therefore, the Nonconformist dictated the work of agitation and organisation. First of all, it insisted upon public meetings in every town, upon the ensuing *Good Friday*, to send up to Parliament "a demand for the instant extension of the suffrage to every adult inhabitant of the land." Then it discussed the subject of "Suffrage Associations;" and finally, in April, it announced "A Complete Suffrage Conference at Birmingham," which resulted in the formation of "The National Complete Suffrage Union," with Joseph Sturge as Chairman; the same individual who, in 1836, figured as Chairman of the Voluntary Church Association. In the Nonconformist of April 13th and 20th, there appears a detailed account of all the events referred to, of the persons

present, the provisional committee, the agents, and the speeches delivered on the occasion.

But the most important statement is that found in the former number, where the editor boasts, "It is a source of peculiar gratification to ourselves, that in the first number of the second year of its existence, we are able to point to these proceedings" (of the Complete Suffrage Union) "as the firstfruits of the establishment of the Nonconformist." In the Secretary's report of the Provisional Committee, it is also stated that "About 200 Ministers of religion, of all denominations, have signed the memorial in favour of Complete Suffrage;" and that "The Committee would fail in their duty if they omitted to notice the invaluable service rendered to their cause by the series of able articles, under the title of 'Complete Suffrage,' which have appeared in the Nonconformist." Then follows the remark: "A recent article in the Eclectic Review approbates all the points of the Charter, with the exception of annual parliaments." After this recognition, what wonder that at a meeting of the General Committee of the Council of the National Complete Suffrage Union, shortly afterwards, it was unanimously resolved, "That the Nonconformist newspaper, having zealously co-operated in the origination of

the Complete Suffrage movement, and having received the enthusiastic approval of the Conference, this Council, having obtained the consent of the editor, and made with him the necessary arrangements, do hereby recognise and recommend that paper to the people as the weekly organ of the Union," with the addition, "and at the same time they desire to promote the circulation of that paper by every means in their power." Need I record how faithfully the Nonconformist discharged the duties thus confided to it; with what devotion it nursed its own bantling?

Let it suffice to add that Mr. Sharman Crawford was appointed the Parliamentary champion of the National Complete Suffrage Union; that Complete Suffrage was interpreted to mean, "that every male citizen of twenty-one years of age is entitled and ought to possess the elective franchise;" that one Reverend Minister "considered that this was a religious movement;" that, among other speakers and delegates present, must be included the *Rev.* Edward Miall, the Rev. J. P. Mursell, Mr. H. Vincent, the Chartist, Lawrence Heyworth, Esq., late M.P. for Derby, the Rev. Dr. Ritchie of Edinburgh, Mr. Josiah Pumphrey, Mr. Arthur Albright, and Mr. John Bright of Rochdale, besides Mr. Joseph Sturge, who was chosen chairman. If further

proof be wanted of the share borne in the Complete Suffrage movement by the Nonconformist, and of the complicity of Dissenters generally therein, I commend to my readers an extract from the Eclectic Review of January, 1843, on the "Rise and Progress of the Complete Suffrage Movement:"—

"If the spirituality of Christ's Church be an object deserving of pursuit, of pecuniary risk, of worldly sacrifice, surely it will not be unbecoming to men who are labouring, sighing, praying for its attainment, to ask themselves what one insurmountable obstacle it is which lies in their way to reach it? Is it class or general representation, the exclusive or the democratic principle? Were the people fairly masters of their own affairs, how long would an Established Church continue to misrepresent Christianity, to foster popular ignorance, to cripple educational effort, to abet every oppressive monopoly, to bless and consecrate the emblems and the spirit of war, and to hunt down, worry, and strip of its earthly comforts, vital godliness, whenever it displays itself? Truly Protestant Dissenters have little reason to cling with the tenacity of fond attachment to aristocratic supremacy. Complete Suffrage may, and we verily believe will, remove from between Christianity and the people of this

empire, many conventual and artificial barriers. It will sweep out of the way a system of ecclesiastical sanctity and priestly mediation, the worldly emoluments and the legal power of whose official agents and abettors have always stood opposed to the spread of genuine piety. It will thus open to the Gospel a wide door of utterance, will throw the Church of Christ upon its own resources, and compel it to fling off that immense mass of hypocrisy which now cleaves to it, which conceals its real character, paralyzes its tenderest sympathies, and well-nigh deprives it of influence for good. Therefore it is that we take a deep religious interest in the progress of a movement in itself purely political. * * * The Nonconformist, a weekly newspaper, took the lead in the hopeful and much hoped for enterprise. It laboured, through a series of articles, subsequently collected together in a cheap pamphlet, and widely circulated through all parts of the land, to demonstrate the right of the working men to the franchise. Here once more the old doctrine of *bonâ fide* national representation was thrown upon the surface, with the variation only that it appeared under a new name. The Nonconformist entitled it Complete Suffrage, which cognomen, up to the present time, it has retained."

This extract is conclusive upon two points. It not

only confirms but proves what I intend to be the moral of this volume. Complete suffrage, the democratic principle, would sweep out of the way not only aristocratic supremacy, but the Established Church, both of which were always identified in the organs of the political Dissenters subsequent to the year 1835. And it was with that object, "to give the dust of the Established Church to the four winds of Heaven," that Dissent adopted and fostered the democratic principle. In the testimony of the Eclectic, we have also additional evidence to the part played by Mr. Miall and the Nonconformist in the promotion of the Complete Suffrage movement. And as it began with the Nonconformist, so it ended in the Nonconformist being recognised as its weekly organ. With respect to the elements fused together in the Complete Suffrage Union, they consisted wholly of Dissent and Radicalism, but Quakers and Chartists constituted two of the main ingredients, as the names mentioned above indicate. Other quotations, however, remain to be extracted from the Eclectic and Nonconformist calculated to astonish even more. In this year, 1842, the Chartist agitation, it will be remembered, assumed a somewhat imposing aspect, the Monster Petition having been presented in the House of Commons and two several motions made in behalf of the petitioners. But how

many of my readers are aware of the fact that the authors and founders of the Complete Suffrage Union actually meditated a junction with the Chartists? Yet the Nonconformist and Eclectic not only accorded a general approval to the six points of the National Charter, but went so far as to identify the Complete Suffrage and Chartist movements. The following extracts I commend to the candid judgment of every reasoning and reasonable creature. Upon the former, taken from the Eclectic of April, I am content to rest my defence, and it proves something more than I have asserted. Thus proceeds the reviewer:—

"These then are the fundamental principles of that much misunderstood document, 'The People's Charter.' Recently these principles have been revived, and subjected to the test of the most searching and yet the most candid scrutiny in one of the tracts named at the head of this article, and entitled, 'Complete Suffrage.' It consists of a series of articles, which have appeared successively in the pages of the Nonconformist newspaper. They constitute one of the most purely philosophical dissertations which has ever come before us on such a subject and within such a compass. The writer disputes his way, inch by inch, from the most elementary axiom of political science, with a frank-

ness and fearlessness in excellent moral correspondence with the justness and catholicity of his views. We have just detached the leading feature of the national charter, namely, the system of Universal Suffrage. We confess that we find in it much of political justice, and but little ground for serious and reasonable alarm. The protection of the vote by means of the ballot we have already considered, and warmly and honestly recommended. The proposal of elective districts appears to us essential to the carrying out of the principle of the representative system. We may safely leave, as open questions, the remaining proposal of the Charter."

Turn we now to the Nonconformist of April, which in one page alludes to "a splendid article on Chartism, which appears in the Eclectic Review for the present month, and which we cordially recommend to the attention of our readers." In the same number occurs the following passage:—"The Complete Suffrage Conference at Birmingham meets this week. We are anxious above all things to effect a junction of the middle and labouring classes upon the basis of a large and searching plan of political reform. Should it be deemed by the Conference wise to adopt, with a view to that purpose, what are technically called the 'six points,'

we have no reason to complain, inasmuch as we have never concealed from our readers our substantial belief of the soundness of each and all of them. From the opportunities of observation which have been afforded to us, we have reason to think that those of the middle classes, who have embraced the doctrine of Complete Suffrage, are quite prepared to yield to the other matters comprehended in the People's Charter."

Thus the Eclectic Review credits the Nonconformist with the revival of the fundamental principles of the "People's Charter." To those principles, the Eclectic gave in its adhesion. The Nonconformist, in turn, cordially recommended the Eclectic's "splendid article on Chartism." It went much farther; it confessed its own "substantial belief of the soundness of each and all of the six points;" and it also recorded its conviction "that those of the middle classes, who have embraced the doctrine of Complete Suffrage, are quite prepared to yield to the other matters comprehended in the People's Charter." Here, then, we get a full view of political Dissent. It is Chartism, and something more. It is Chartism combined with the separation of Church and State. It is the democratic principle in all its entirety in civil and in ecclesiastical matters. And this is Mr.

Miall's creed, Mr. John Bright's creed, and Mr. Henry Vincent's creed, as it was the creed of Mr. Joseph Sturge, Mr. Sharman Crawford, Mr. Fergus O'Connor, and of Daniel O'Connell. This was and is the creed of all who joined in the Complete Suffrage Union, and therefore it was and is the creed of hundreds of Dissenting Ministers. Let it not then be forgotten that the Anti-State-Church party is also the anti-monarchical party; that, by its own confessions, it embodies the democratic principle; that, by its own records, it stands committed to Chartism—to universal suffrage, to the secret ballot, to equal electoral districts, to annual parliaments, and to the remuneration of delegates. Whenever, therefore, the Liberation Society, or its agents or associates,—whenever Mr. Baines, or Mr. Bright, or Mr. Miall, comes forward and affects to plead for moderate measures, for bit-by-bit concessions, for political reform by instalments, let them be brought face to face with the Chartism of their early days, when they dared to say what they thought, and to think what they said.

Did space permit, it might be desirable to pursue our investigations upon this subject to much greater length. What was the influence of Dissent upon Chartism? How far did the countenance and sympathy of Dissenters tend to cherish the delusions

of the Chartists? How far is Dissent responsible for the miserable disturbances and commotions imputed to Chartism solely, between the years 1842 and 1849? What share had Mr. Miall in creating the political ferment of 1848? What connection was there between the broad-brimmed perukes of Joseph Sturge and John Bright, and the broad-barbed pikes of Fergus O'Connor's physical force "Pet-lambs"? What was the effect of the preaching of those hundreds of Ministers, who joined the Complete Suffrage and Chartist movement, upon the consequent riots? Finally, what was the proportion of treasonable incentives supplied by the British Anti-State-Church Association, and what that supplied by the National Complete Suffrage Union?

But I must hasten onwards. Though the National Complete Suffrage Union was the first offspring of the Nonconformist, it was neither the last nor the most illustrious of its progeny. Its advent preceded, only by some two years, that of the British Anti-State-Church Association. It was, indeed, in the autumn of 1843, that preparations were made for bringing to the birth this second and larger conception of the Nonconformist. So early as September, that journal discussed in its columns, the plan of an Anti-State-Church Conven-

tion, and, as usual, the idea was warmly approved by the Eclectic. This first Conference met in April of 1844, and in its proceedings is to be found an explicit acknowledgment of the founder, and his handiwork in the establishment of the British Anti-State-Church Association. "The history of the circumstances which have led to the Conference, and justification of the movement," contains the following statement:—"In 1842, the editor of the Nonconformist produced a series of articles on the evils of State and Church alliance, and proposed a convention of delegates to discuss the propriety of adopting measures for an aggressive movement, but the suggestion only tended further to illustrate the apathy of Dissenters at that period." But in 1843, the proposal of a convention from the same quarter was more successful, resulting, as was before remarked, in the first Anti-State-Church Conference in London, and the British Anti-State-Church Association. But the first meeting convened for the purpose had been held at Leicester, on the 7th of December, 1843, at which Dr. Cox, Dr. Price, and Mr. Miall were requested to act as a committee, to carry out the general design of the meeting, by completing a list to constitute a Provisional Committee. That Provisional Committee consisted of nearly 200 indivi-

duals—145 ministers and 48 laymen—and proceeded to elect an Executive Committee of 21. This Executive Committee, having assembled on the 8th of February, 1844, "continued to meet weekly, and to devise the best means of obtaining a conference of the friends of religious freedom, and the decided opponents of State-Church establishments." At length the Conference, "which was composed of more than 700 delegates, chiefly ministers of non-conforming or dissenting denominations," met on the 30th of April, Mr. Miall being requested to act as one of the secretaries. But Mr. Miall took another part as well. He produced a paper on the "Practical evils resulting from the Union of Church and State," which, having been read, was in due course "received and placed upon the Records of the Conference." This paper, as might be expected, is a perfect mirror of dissenting and democratic principles—an epitome of the creed of the Complete Suffrage Tracts and of the Nonconformist Sketch-Book. But we can only afford space for two brief extracts, culled from pages 47 and 63. Here, then, is Mr. Miall's view of the Established Church and Clergy:—

"In checking all improvement, in resisting all change, in stunting the growth of public political opinion, in retarding the progress of education, in

defending monopoly, in gilding over the atrocities of war—it is questionable whether the State could have found elsewhere so zealous, efficient, and successful an agency as that of an established priesthood. * * Such is the practical working of the State-Church system as developed in these realms. Its whole history proves it to have been maintained for political purposes only. It is not, in any sense, a religious institution. It is not to be dealt with as such. It belongs to the world, and it is subservient to worldly ends. It is the outward form of Christianity made to answer the designs of a dominant aristocracy. Like all great delusions, it involves in its meshes a considerable number of good men—men whom charity would recognise as members of the Church of Christ—whilst enlightened conscience denounces the ecclesiastical aggregation, of which they form but a small part, as no church at all. But the good in it which already exists would survive the dissolution of the system, and would become all the more active and influential for its enfranchisement. The baneful results which it produces are its natural fruits. They can only be destroyed by destroying the source from which they spring. Whilst the world lasts, that which is conceived in error will grow up to mischief; and the policy which is radically unsound, no reforma-

tion can essentially change. There is but one way to protect society from its evils; and that way is to uproot it altogether."

With respect to the special mission of the British Anti-State-Church Association, we are also informed that "The separation of Church and State must involve:

"1. The repeal of all those laws which make the profession or disclaimer of any form of religious belief, or the subscribing of any declaration containing a pledge of a certain line of conduct towards any religious body, a necessary qualification for the exercise of any public office or employment; or which confer on the ministers of any form of religion, as such, the right to fill any parliamentary station or public office, or to exercise any public duty; or which permit none but the ministers of a particular faith to conduct the services of religion on occasions of state ceremonies, and before the two houses of Parliament and other national bodies and institutions; or which devote money taken out of the parliamentary taxes, or out of any branch of public revenue, or any public lands, public buildings, or other public property, to the sustentation of any form of religious worship; or which confer exemptions from public payments, or create distinctions of any nature, honourable or otherwise,

founded on the profession of any form of religious belief.

"2. The enactment of laws for the entire abolition of public exactions in support of any form of religious faith, and for the resumption by Parliament (having regard to the life-interests of present possessors), and application to strictly national purposes, of all lands, buildings, and other property, at any time given by the Crown, or by Parliament, for the sustentation of any form of religious worship, or for the exclusive use of bodies of men professing a specific form of religious belief."

Perhaps my readers would like something more obvious and palpable than these definitions. Here, then, is the substance of both from the same source. The separation of Church and State involves "the repeal and abolition of all laws and usages which require the profession of a particular faith by the monarch, or the disclaimer of articles of religious belief by the possessors of certain high offices, or the declaration required as a qualification for offices and employment; or which confer upon the bishops the right to sit in the House of Lords, or upon ecclesiastical courts, their jurisdiction, or upon the clergy the exclusive use of churchyards, and certain tutorial offices in colleges and schools; or which restrict the administration of

the coronation oath and the employment of parliamentary, and army and navy chaplains, and the performance of religious worship at the Universities, to the ministers of a particular faith; or which authorise the exaction of tithes, church-rates, Easter dues, and the payment of money by Parliament in annual grants; or which secure possession of any lands, buildings, or other property as bishops' lands, cathedrals, churches, parsonage houses, glebe, and the colleges, buildings, and lands connected with the Universities, to the exclusive use of the Established Church; and lastly, the repeal of all laws and usages which create distinctions of any kind, honourable or invidious, such as those which permit the insignia of office to appear only at the churches of the Establishment, or those which allow drawbacks on building materials for the Established Church." Such is the practical meaning of separating Church and State, coupled however with the provision for applying to strictly national purposes whatever property is now enjoyed by the Church established. Such is the definition, such the principle, such the object of the Liberation Society. But of all the papers read at the Conference, the most curious and instructive is one by the Rev. J. P. Mursell, on "The means of promoting the objects of the Conference, and on the

spirit in which they should be employed." After suggesting among other means "the circulation of appropriate tracts, and the establishment of a depôt, in which every variety of tract of which the very voluminous theme admits should be lodged; papers of higher pretensions; periodical literature and the press; popular addresses and lectures, periodical addresses in every meeting-house of the country, and a monthly lecture suited more especially to the juvenile members; accredited agents and highly qualified lecturers, to deliver lectures in every part of the empire; popular education; and Sabbath-schools, in which the pupils should be well-informed on the meaning and constitution of a Church, on the spirituality of the Redeemer's reign, on the sinfulness and mischiefs of the assumptions of religious establishments:" the author proceeds:—

"After all, the Church of England is a political structure, an ecclesiastical corporation, based upon Acts of Parliament, and it will be through the mediumof the Legislature that it will be overthrown. The benumbing, deluding, destructive influence it exerts on society, in its arrogant pretensions, as the representative of the Christian religion, may be more or less counteracted by the exertions and influence of voluntary Christian societies. But for these, the establishment would long before this

have been developed in all its terrible proportions; and, indeed, the whole nation would at this hour have been prostrate at the feet of a ruthless and besotted superstition, as in the case of the kingdoms of Western Europe, and in the powers cursed by the domination of the Greek Church.

"But, after all we may effect by the diffusion of tracts, the institution of lectures, the establishment of schools, or any other suitable means, it must be obvious to all, that the scene of ultimate operations must be that in which the suffrages of the people are recorded. We may prepare the public mind by wise and persevering efforts; but to this point that mind must ultimately turn. Dissenters must avail themselves of their rights as citizens to advance their great Master's cause. They must endeavour to send to the Parliament of the nation men of strong heads and sound hearts, men who fear God and venerate His Son, and who will be prepared to carry the great and sacred principles which they have learnt from His Word, into the presence of nobles, and before the thrones of princes. It should be a main object of the society to promote rational and consistent views on this point, and to avail itself, whenever the proper time shall arrive, of this final mode of effecting the liberation of Christianity from the debasing trammels of the State."

In the evening of the day that paper was received and placed upon the Records of the Conference, a society was formed, entitled "The British Anti-State-Church Association," and based upon the following principle:—"That in matters of religion man is responsible to God alone; that all legislation by secular governments in affairs of religion is an encroachment upon the rights of man, and an invasion of the prerogatives of God; and that the application by law of the resources of the State to the maintenance of any form or forms of religious worship and instruction is contrary to reason, hostile to human liberty, and directly opposed to the Word of God." It is further said that "the object of the society be the liberation of religion from all governmental or legislative interference," in other words, "to seek the dissolution of the unhallowed union of Church and State," but "not to destroy the Episcopalian Church, or to effect any alteration in its doctrines and forms of worship, but to detach from it the power, the patronage, and the interference of the State, and to leave it self-supported and self-governed, like other religious bodies." With respect to the policy to be pursued, in furtherance of those objects, among other modes of action the following are suggested:—"The promotion of the return to Parliament, wherever

practicable, of men of known integrity and ability, conversant with the principles of this Society, and disposed to avail themselves of all suitable occasions for exciting discussion thereupon, and ready to promote its object; and the furnishing of such members, when returned, with all the special information the Society can command.

"The support of such members, whenever the Council shall deem it advisable to agitate the question of State Churches in the Legislature, by means of petitions to the Houses of Parliament, and memorials to the Throne, and in other appropriate and constitutional ways."

Such are the principles, objects, and policy of what was once styled "The British Anti-State-Church Association," but of what is now better known as "The Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control." If such a combination be not anti-constitutional and illegal; if it do not amount to conspiracy against the peace of the realm; if to pursue such objects by such means be not treasonable, then the British Constitution provides for its own destruction; it invites revolution, and harbours its own assassins. It is pretended, indeed, that the object of the Society must be sought by lawful and peaceful means, and by such only; but what means can be either

lawful or peaceful when used for the subversion of the fundamental laws of the Constitution? At the risk of wearying the reader, I beg to add a few more choice extracts from the publications of the British Anti-State-Church Association. In Mr. Miall's tract, "Religious Establishments Incompatible with the Rights of Citizenship," occurs the following passage:—

"One word by way of application, and we have done. We ask whether, if the foregoing representations be correct, patriotism, equally with religion, does not demand of every Dissenter the employment of his electoral franchise directly with a view to put an end to this evil? Can they be Liberal politicians who, by upholding a Church establishment, would thus curtail the rights of citizenship? Ought they to be trusted? Must not their principles be radically unsound? Have not the debates and divisions on the Maynooth Endowment Bill demonstrated thus much? Henceforth, then, let us test parliamentary candidates by their views of ecclesiastical establishments. They cannot be the friends of freedom who advocate the continuance of the Church-and-State alliance; and, sure we are, they utterly misconceive the genius of Christianity. They are, therefore, unfit to be entrusted with the business of legislation."

The author of another production concludes, "that the independence of the State and the Church is the normal state of these two societies, and the only one in which either can subsist among democratic communities." In harmony with which follows the declaration that, "in 1776, the great American Revolution, with which began the new political developments of nations, inscribed the independence of the Church and the State upon the frontlet with which it encircled its brow. The Constitution then decreed by the people of the United States, contains a provision to this effect: 'In order,' runs the preamble of that remarkable Act, 'to establish justice, to promote the general welfare, and to perpetuate for ourselves and our posterity the benefits of liberty, Congress shall not make any law relative to the establishment or prohibition of any form of religion.'"

But one of the most comprehensive of all the tracts is that by Mr. Miall, with the title, "What is the Separation of Church and State?" This tract not only indorses the exhaustive definition before quoted, but thus disposes of a question not often discussed:—

"There remain now only the church edifices to dispose of, and we shall have completed our task. With the exception of the cathedrals, which, per-

haps, might be kept up for other public purposes than ecclesiastical, we think they might be fairly made over in perpetuity to the inhabitants of the parish in which each may be situate—to be sold, rented, or given, as the ratepayers may determine. That under any feasible arrangement they will generally remain in the hands of Episcopalians, is contemplated by us with no regret. Ours is no warfare against a sect; and in the adjustment of details in the settlement of the great question we have at heart, we are prompted, not merely to do justice, but to practise generosity." How truly liberal and large-hearted! That such philanthropy should be doomed to waste its fragrance upon the desert air, is a reflection pitiful, wondrous pitiful!

It is scarcely necessary to add, that Mr. Miall recognised and claimed the British Anti-State-Church Association as the second emanation from his contributions in the Nonconformist, or that the Nonconformist was universally regarded as the pioneer in the Anti-State-Church movement. Among other persons present at the first Anti-State-Church Conference was Joseph Sturge, chairman, and Sharman Crawford, parliamentary representative of the National Complete Suffrage Union; the former protesting, "I have never been able to distinguish between my political and religious

duties. I believe the distinction is one drawn by priestcraft;" and the latter affirming that "there can be no security for religious or political liberty, while the connection between the Church and the State remains." Even the Eclectic of January, 1844, declared, that "Aristocracy and an established hierarchy are but Siamese twins, united by the ligament of exclusiveness;" and the Voluntary proclaimed that "the Dissenter who is not a political Dissenter, is unfaithful to his country and to Christ." In the same spirit, but in a more tangible form, the Nonconformist had announced, in its first number of 1844, that "the perfect equality of civil and of ecclesiastical rights for every man was the pole-star by which its course should be directed." What wonder, then, if among the delegates present or elected to the Anti-State-Church Conference, are to be found the names of several leading Democrats of the day; of many, too, who were present at the Complete Suffrage Conference? What wonder that Chartism and Quakerism contributed their quota of delegates; that we find not only Mr. G. Thompson, Dr. Bowring, M.P., S. Crawford, Esq., M.P., three Mr. Mialls, Mr. Apsley Pellatt, Rev. Dr. Ritchie, Mr. J. Pumphrey, Mr. A. Albright, J. Sturge, Esq., J. S. Trelawney, Esq., M.P., among the delegates; but Fergus O'Connor, Esq., M.P.,

and other Chartists and demagogues, among those who, by their presence, did homage to the inauguration of the British Anti-State-Church Association? Can there be any doubt, moreover, that among the 600 or 700 delegates, the majority of whom one of themselves confesses to have consisted of ministers of dissenting denominations, there figured the vast majority, if not the whole, of those 200 Ministers who signed the memorial in favour of Complete Suffrage? Mr. Miall's preaching had already borne its legitimate fruits. Foremost among his disciples in the revolutionary crusade for perfect equality in civil and in ecclesiastical rights, stood forth the dissenting ministers; and if any one be curious to know how the advice of the Rev. J. P. Mursell has been acted upon, let him procure a list of the Liberation Society's publications.

Meanwhile it will be advisable to take a brief review of what we already know of the principles, objects, and policy of that organisation. So early as 1839, the Eclectic complained of the want of union, vigour, and concentrated energies on the part of Dissent. Subsequent to 1837, no traces are to be found of any alliance between Dissent and the Government of the day, and the temporary truce patched up in 1837 resulted disastrously to both parties. During the three years 1838, 1839,

1840, however, Dissent made common cause with Radicalism or Democracy in parliament, but no formal alliance was established. In fact, the several organisations of Dissent tended rather to distraction than to union. Meanwhile, Conservatism was daily gaining heart and consistency. The triumph of 1841 brought matters to a crisis. As the Nonconformist expressed it, "The advent of Sir R. Peel to power is the commencement of a new era in the progress of Reform—the setting in of political winter." Accordingly, the mission of the Nonconformist, from its first origin, was to rectify the blunders and failings of Dissent during the previous eight years, from 1833 to 1841, and to lay a new foundation for future action. First of all, Dissent itself had to pass through the process of a new reformation. It was taught to begin from certain fixed tangible principles, and not from mere practical grievances. The separation of Church and State was to be the only active motive principle of Dissent: but that principle was to be considered as bound up indissolubly with another—with Democracy in civil concerns. Hence Dissent was represented as twin-born with Democracy. On the contrary, a State Church was identified with the aristocratic principle. Radicalism, therefore, was the natural ally of Dissent, and Conservatism the

natural ally of the Established Church. As to Whiggism, it was denounced as lukewarm, as equally hostile with Conservatism to the democratic principle, whether in Church or State; but as intent only upon place and patronage, and therefore, as using the people merely to abuse their confidence for its own selfish ends.

With these views, the Nonconformist first agitated political organisations—the Complete Suffrage movement and the Chartist movement. The "Nonconformist Sketch-Book" inculcates the same theories as the "Complete Suffrage Tracts," associating, as it does, Voluntaryism with Democracy, and State Churches with Aristocracy. Each blends with the other in the Nonconformist, as two constituent elements of a Democratic constitution. Lord John Russell, indeed, in 1854, proclaimed the same affinity to exist; but the Nonconformist not only joined Dissent and Democracy together, but advocated their joint claims, on the ground of patriotism, religion, and conscience. It took up arms openly and avowedly against the British Constitution as it is: but two great bulwarks stood in its way, which required different armaments to throw them down. On one side stood the Church, to be assailed by the British Anti-State-Church Association; on the other, stood the Reform Bill of

1832, to be attacked by the powers of Chartism. The common foe, however, was the self-same Democratic principle over all estates and powers, civil or ecclesiastical, supreme. Nevertheless, the Reform Bill was the Malakoff, and the State Church only the Redan. The former commanded the latter. Carry the former position by the canister and grape of Chartism, and the latter would surrender at discretion. So argued the Nonconformist. To Chartism and to the British Anti-State-Church Association there was one common goal. To that goal they pursued different though often intersecting roads; but always intended and hoped to meet at last. Such were the principles, objects, and policy broached by the Nonconformist. And those principles, objects, and policy were adopted by the British Anti-State-Church Association in 1844, as the principles, objects, and policy of Dissent. Not only was Mr. Miall's "Sketch-Book" referred to as the source of inspiration, but he himself contributed a paper, expressing the very same sentiments, which was received and placed on the records of the Anti-State-Church Conference. In fact, if we could imagine that the commemoration of benefactors formed any part of Dissenting ceremonies, Mr. Miall would rank as the author and founder of the British Anti-State-Church

Association. Under its auspices, therefore, in the year 1844, it may safely be predicated that Dissent and Democracy became allied. And this truth is still more clearly evinced by the publications of the Association, for religious establishments are pronounced incompatible with the rights of citizenship —with, that is, according to Mr. Miall's view, the personal right of every adult citizen to the suffrage. The British Anti-State-Church Association, therefore, as the exponent of Democracy in civil and ecclesiastical matters, lays the axe at the root of the British Constitution. Its members, indeed, make a profession of loyalty, but that loyalty can be nothing better than lip-service. Perchance it is loyalty to Queen Victoria—to the monarch, but certainly not loyalty to the British monarchy. Where would that monarchy be, if the designs of the British Anti-State-Church Association were once realised,—if the Church, and the Aristocracy, and the Middle-Class, the pillars of the Crown, were all crushed under the heel of universal Democracy, both in Church and State?

Hereafter I shall have occasion to note at length the origin of a Parliamentary and Electoral Committee in subordination to that Association. At present, I may remark that the same error was committed in the electoral policy of the British

Anti-State-Church Association, as in compassing the first principles and objects of political Dissent, immediately after the passing of the Reform Bill. First of all, the Church was attacked as a whole, or in its most fundamental parts. That failing, Reform was demanded on the wholesale scale. Similarly, it was the policy of Dissent at first to recognise no candidate except he pledged himself wholly to its programme of separating Church and State. But with time and experience, the wisdom of the serpent has come over Dissent. It is no longer the wholesale, but retail, business that is transacted. It is no longer "organic reforms" that are advocated, but instalments. The Church is to be separated from the State, not by abstract resolution to that effect, but by gradual means—by the abolition of Church Rates, the throwing open of grammar schools, and colleges, and church-yards, and such like. Complete Suffrage and Chartism are to be obtained, but not all at once. Rather is it by way of the £6 franchise and bit-by-bit reform, that we are to land at the haven of a pure Democracy. Thus also in ecclesiastical matters. Candidates for parliamentary honours are to be pledged to support the Liberation Society, but not its whole programme at once. They are to go a certain way, and then, when they have reached that

spot, they will be again driven onwards, till at last they reach the end. This change, however, in its policy, belongs to a much later period, the latest, indeed, to be touched upon by our narrative. I shall, therefore, proceed to illustrate and confirm the various statements and positions advanced, by the sayings and doings of the British Anti-State-Church Association between 1844 and 1859.

At the annual meeting in 1845, nothing occurred of more note than a suggestion for collections in behalf of the Association in congregations favourable to the Anti-State-Church movement, on or about the ensuing 24th August—St. Bartholomew's Day. But at the first Triennial Conference in 1847, Mr. Henry Vincent, the Chartist demagogue, was not only present, but took a most prominent part in the proceedings. In supporting a resolution, he is reported to have thus expressed himself:—"It is only by going among the people and showing them that while you are teaching Dissenting electors to record their votes on the side of Anti-Church candidates, you are doing your best to purify our electoral system, to raise the tone of England's politics,—it is only by planting yourselves among the Democracy, and by telling that Democracy that Dissent of right belongs to the mob,—it is only by such means that we can show

the English masses that we are arriving at that political liberty, which never came from the cathedral, but proceeds from the conventicle." Another resolution, proposed by Mr. Miall, to the effect that "this Conference solemnly commend to Dissenting electors the duty of employing the franchise in vindication of those ecclesiastical opinions which constitute the sole basis of religious freedom and equality," was supported by the same Henry Vincent, in the midst of cheers and hurrahs, in the following terms:—"I will not vote for a man who is not in favour of Universal Suffrage, but I will not vote for a Universal Suffragist, unless he maintains the doctrine that the Government has no right at all to interfere in matters of religion." As though any living man existed, who could believe in Universal Suffrage under the British Constitution, and not believe in the British Anti-State-Church Association. It was at this Conference that, on the approach of a general election, the Anti-State-Church electors agreed to act in concert, the result of which concerted action, we are told, was the formation of an Anti-State-Church party, numbering above thirty members, in the House of Commons. A resolution was also carried in favour of supporting the Anti-State-Church press. And among other names of persons present, I find those

of Mr. Edward Baines, father and son; of Apsley Pellatt; Joseph Sturge; and Charles Gilpin, now M.P. for Northampton, and Secretary to the Poor Law Commissioners. At the annual meeting in 1848, in moving a resolution similar to his former one, Mr. Miall is reported to have said—"I am a political Dissenter. The separation of Church and State must be effected by political agency. Parliament has taught us to merge all our little differences, that the public mind may be occupied almost exclusively with the great question of a Reform in Parliament, and get that settled first. As soon as the voice of the people has full utterance in Parliament, the future Chancellor of the Exchequer will be happy to avail himself of Mr. Hinton's assistance to prove that Church property is national property, and should be devoted to national purposes." The presence of John Cassell at the annual meeting of 1849, reminds me that there are more publishers than one who consecrate the art of Caxton to the dissemination of Anti-State-Church theories. I may also remark, once for all, that for many years the annual public meetings of the British Anti-State-Church Association were held in Finsbury Chapel.

The second Triennial Conference of 1850 extracted from Mr. Miall the confession, that "Sir J.

Walmesley had offered to come amongst them, if they should desire his presence; and the reason for his absence was solely a wish on the part of the Committee that the two great movements—that of which Sir Joshua was at the head, and the Anti-State-Church movement—should be kept perfectly distinct." What, then, was the movement over which Sir J. Walmesley presided? It was none other than "The National Reform Association," to which belonged also E. Miall, A. Pellatt, Rev. T. Binney, Hume, Cobden, Rev. J. Burnet, G. Thompson, C. Lushington, S. Morley, and Fergus O'Connor—another motley assortment of Dissenters and Chartists. What need, then, to discuss its principles and objects? Briefly, it took the place or did the work of the Complete Suffrage Union, sapping the civil institutions, and agitating for perfect equality in civil rights, and thus paving the way for the Anti-State-Church Association, and the perfect equality of all religious denominations.

Lord John Russell having divested himself of his threadbare cloak of "finality," and promised to don a new Reform Bill, under the gathering storm of Democratic bluster in 1851, Mr. Miall, in allusion to that embryo, delivered himself of the following oracular announcement at the annual

meeting of the British Anti-State-Church Association:—"I venture to predict that when the new Reform Bill is carried—when the House of Commons reflects with anything like faithfulness the national mind—then this question (of separation of Church and State) will suddenly emerge from its retirement; men will wonder whence its strength has come, and how it has grown up. We are very far from weak. The great body of the working people is with us." And in 1852, on a similar occasion, Mr. Miall said, "I therefore humbly submit that we should tie the hands of no man as to civil liberty, but say this much, and impress it upon the minds of our supporters: *Help forward the Suffrage whenever you can—help forward the Separation of Church and State whenever you can: but if you cannot do both, help forward the Suffrage, and the other will be secure;*" adding that "Dissenters constitute a moiety of the Liberal electors in most large boroughs." At the third Triennial Conference in 1853, several new proposals were brought forward and carried. First of all, on the motion of Mr. Edward Baines, of Leeds, the name of the organisation was changed. Henceforth the British Anti-State-Church Association assumed the title and dignities of "The Society for the Liberation of Religion from State

Patronage and Control." In reference to which alteration, the Executive Committee reported that, "in suggesting a change in the name of the Association, they have deferred to the feelings expressed in many quarters, that its present designation is liable to misapprehension, is needlessly offensive, and is in other respects undesirable." At the same time a slight change was made, not, indeed, in either the actual principles, objects, or policy of the British Anti-State-Church Association, but in the terms in which they were expressed. For the objects of the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control were and are yet declared to be:—

"1. The abrogation of all laws and usages which inflict disability, or confer privilege, on ecclesiastical grounds, upon any subject of the realm. 2. The discontinuance of all payments from the Consolidated Fund, and of all parliamentary grants and compulsory exactions, for religious purposes. 3. The application to secular uses, *after an equitable satisfaction of existing interests*, of all national property now held in trust by the United Church of England and Ireland and the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; and, concurrently with it, the liberation of those Churches from all State control."

And its general plan of action is of a threefold character—

"1. It seeks, by means of meetings, lectures, and the use of the press, to diffuse information illustrative of the tendency and results of employing the power of law in aid of religion, and to create a public opinion in favour of its aims. 2. It endeavours to organise the friends of the Society in such a manner as will enable them to exert their combined influence on Parliament; and, especially, it watches the proceedings of Parliament, to seize every opportunity for gradually securing the Society's objects, as well as to prevent any new infringement of civil equality on ecclesiastical grounds. 3. It urges the duty of, and affords facilities for, acquiring and exercising electoral power, to promote the return to Parliament of those who are favourable to the Society's Parliamentary policy."

Besides which, we are graciously informed that "The Society is thoroughly unsectarian in character, and *does not desire to effect any alteration in the doctrines, or forms of worship, of either the Church of England or that of Scotland.*"

A paper was also read by Mr. Miall, on "The Prospects and Duties of the Society in relation to the House of Commons and to its Constituencies,"

which contained the following striking admissions: "If you will look over the division lists of last session on those questions which most nearly touched our object, and which most distinctly expressed our principles, you will pretty surely find the names of professed Churchmen, representing large constituencies, and for the most part Radical in politics, recorded in our favour; their zeal, their spirit, their assiduity, in furtherance of our views, could not have been more conspicuous, if they had been themselves Dissenters. The Irish Roman Catholics are not with us by the force of conviction, but by the force of circumstances." It was, however, allowed by Mr. Miall, that "until a new Reform Bill has been passed, I see but little to be gained, but much to be lost, by hazarding a pitched battle." But Mr. Miall's paper comprised two other suggestions, which were at once adopted—the appointment of "A Committee for Parliamentary Purposes," and of "A Standing Committee for Electoral Purposes." Hitherto, it was explained, the mission of the Association had comprised the work of tuition and organisation chiefly, and with what results the remarks of Mr. Miall in 1851 testified. Henceforth the House of Commons and the constituencies were to feel the effects of direct intervention on the part of the Anti-State-Church

Association. As pointed out already, the electoral policy consisted at first in pledging candidates to the abstract principle of separation of Church and State. Recently the failure of that policy has been confessed by another being substituted in its place. But from 1847 even, the policy formally recognised in 1853 had been tried, and for many years proved a great gulf of difference and enmity between the Whig party and the Liberation Society. How it has been modified of late specially to meet the scruples of the Whigs, and how the mutual relations between the Whigs and that Society have improved in consequence, will be pointed out in due time.

In 1854 the Parliamentary Committee, with Dr. Foster as salaried chairman, was busied in procuring petitions against church-rates; and in 1855 the Electoral Committee was appointed, with S. Morley as chairman, the same gentleman who figured among the conglomeration of Dissenters and Chartists combined together in the National Reform Association. It was in 1855 that the Liberator, the monthly organ of the Liberation Society, first dawned upon the world, with the prefatory intimation that it was to be the recognised medium of communication with that Society's supporters; and one of those supporters is reported, in an early

number, as saying that "in attacking church-rates they were laying the axe at the root of the Church Establishment." At the next Triennial Conference, in 1856,—which, be it observed, is called the fourth of the Liberation Society, though that Society was not heard of before 1853, a fact establishing the identity of the two organisations,—Mr. S. Morley explained that "the Parliamentary and Electoral Committees of the Society brought ecclesiastical questions directly in contact with the House of Commons and the constituencies, by which they must be ultimately decided." It was by petitions, addresses, and analyses of votes of members of Parliament, that this direct contact was kept up. At the same time, some light was thrown, in 1856, upon the policy of the Anti-State-Church party by the speech of Mr. Deputy Pewtress, who said he "greatly sympathised with the Anti-State-Church Association, but he could not approve of their going slap-dash for the separation of Church and State. Experience proved that their wisdom was to ask for all they desired, take what they could get, and then ask for more." To the same effect was Mr. Miall's address:—"We are not constituted an Anti-Church-Rate Association. We profess to go the straightest and nearest way towards the liberation of religion from all State patronage and control. We do not

mean that we will run our heads against any wall that may happen to be in our way; but that if we cannot get over the wall, we will get round it, and arrive at our ultimate object as soon as possible."

In 1857, we are informed that "The Committee have now in contemplation a small practical manual, and other publications, for the guidance of those who wish to acquire the Parliamentary franchise." The purport of this announcement will be best understood after reading an extract from a speech of W. J. Fox, Esq., then M.P. for Oldham, who thus addressed the public meeting in St. Martin's Hall:—"If I understand the principle of this Society, it is that religion should be entirely free from the patronage, from the control, from the interference altogether of the State. It is a great principle. It implies the throwing open of our great Universities, and giving the people a share of that magnificent mental heritage, which was bequeathed to the entire community by the liberality of our forefathers. It implies the dismission of bishops from their places in the House of Lords. It implies the abolition of church-rates and similar impositions; it implies the abolition of every tax that makes one man pay in any form for the religion of others. I believe that State interference with religion is alike pernicious to religion and the

State; it corrupts the one and it enslaves the other. We have a new Parliament, more extensively committed than any, perhaps, that has come before it, to the cause of Parliamentary Reform; but he must be a very sanguine man indeed, who expects without it to realise the great objects of this meeting—the liberation of religion from State patronage. *Political Reform is the broad highway in which we must march to religious freedom and equality.* There is no shorter road, there is no better path."

The following extract from the Nonconformist of September of that year, is also interesting. It will explain itself. "One of the reasons," we are there told, "for starting the Nonconformist in 1841, was the apprehension excited about that time, that there was a fixed design on the part of our leading statesmen, to transplant State-Churchism from British soil to all our remotest dependencies, and to give practical force to the truths it enunciated, the Anti-State-Church Association — now the Liberation Society — was constituted and put in motion."

In 1858, Mr. Miall again relieved himself as follows: "They wished for an entire disseverance of the Church from the State. Their object was not to get rid of the church-rate merely. They were going further than the church-rate question,

which was only as a grain of sand to a mountain. Let it not be forgotten, that a much wider and broader question remained behind, a question which had to do with the great principle on which Church affairs should be conducted, in relation to the civil institutions of the land. Let those who approved the Church-Rate Bill, take all the advantage they could from the avowal; but they did not, and never did, intend to abide by the Church-Rate Bill as a final measure." To which Peter Taylor, Esq.—now M.P. for Leicester, I believe, and one of that band of brothers, which includes also Mr. James Stansfeld, M.P., late Junior Lord of the Admiralty, and Mazzini—added, "that they must attack church-rates, not as the fortress they had to gain, but as a commanding outpost from which, when obtained, they could the better direct their guns against the citadel itself."

With this quotation, for the present I conclude my description of the Anti-State-Church Association—its principles, objects, and policy—as collected from its own records. It may be that my labours on this branch of our subject have been too elaborate, and sometimes chargeable with tautology; but as an excuse, I urge not only the importance of the question under consideration, but the necessity of fully establishing my case from

the voluntary confessions of my opponents, and also the prevalent ignorance on the whole subject. Henceforth, I trust it may be taken for settled, that the Anti-State-Church movement is thoroughly revolutionary, as well in its principles as in its objects and policy; that it is committed to the Democratic principle, not only in its ecclesiastical, but in its civil polity; but that its special mission is to direct the Democratic element against the Established Church. No less true, however, and certain, is the fact, that the overthrow of the Established Church depends upon a new Reform Bill. That till the franchise be extended and lowered, till another Democratic inroad has been executed upon the Act of 1832, the Liberation Society has no hope of battering down the ramparts of the Established Church. It follows, then, as the policy of the Anti-State-Church party, to support all Democratic measures alike—those tending to subvert the Church as the end of all their aims, and those tending to repeal the Reform Bill of 1832, as the surest means and shortest path to that end. And these are the principles, objects, and policy originally marked out for the Anti-State Church agitators by Mr. Miall in the columns of the Nonconformist.

The advent of the British Anti-State-Church

Association, therefore, was the epoch when Dissent became not only identified with, but allied to, Democratic principles and Democratic parties, both within and without the walls of Parliament. Starting from which, as our standpoint, let us now revert to the Parliamentary events bearing upon our subject, from 1844 to 1859. Mr. Sharman Crawford continued his efforts in 1844 with even more desperation than before. Thrice he proposed to stop the supplies in the course of a single month, till what he termed the public grievances were redressed; which grievances may be estimated by a subsequent motion of the same individual, "the essential principles of which were these three—(1.) Extension of the franchise; (2.) A new arrangement and a more equal distribution of the electoral districts; (3.) Vote by ballot." This motion, however, only tended to bring out the strength of Conservatism, for it secured no more than 33 votes. And Mr. Ward's motion on the Irish Church, the same year, though the chosen battle-field of the Democratic forces, commanded no more than 179 votes. In 1845 Mr. Sharman Crawford appeared in his other part, that of Anti-State-Church champion. But an amendment of his to abolish all the religious establishments in the kingdom only served to cover himself and his cause with ridicule. It was supported by

the mighty muster of four M.P.s, inclusive of tellers, the four being Mr. Sharman Crawford, Mr. C. Hindley, Mr. T. Duncombe, and Mr. T. Wakley.

In 1846 Sir Robert Peel resigned. Whatever else may be predicated of his reign of office, certain it is, that from 1840 to 1847 the Church enjoyed comparative peace and absolute immunity from danger. But on the return to office of the Whigs, and under Lord John Russell, a second Democratic campaign was planned. It has been already remarked, that it was at the election of 1847 that Dissenters first acted in concert,—at the first General Election, that is, after the formation of the British Anti-State-Church Association. Since then, it appears, a party has always existed within the House of Commons pledged to the objects and policy of that Association. Henceforth, therefore, we may remark, once for all, that the Dissenting interest in the House of Commons will be found to have committed itself to all Democratic innovations alike, whether affecting the Church or the State, from church-rates down to the ballot. When, then, Mr. Hume resuscitated the question of Reform in sober earnest, in 1848, by a motion to the effect that "the elective franchise shall be so extended as to include all householders —that votes shall be taken by ballot—that the duration of Parliaments shall not exceed three years—

and that the apportionment of members to population shall be made more equal," he was supported by the respectable minority of 84. And Mr. Berkeley having succeeded to Mr. Ward, and re-introduced the Ballot, managed to defeat the Ministry by 86 against 81 votes. Both these motions were again proposed the following year, and with all but like results numerically. In this year, 1849, it was that the then Mr. Trelawney, who had been elected a delegate to the Anti-State-Church Conference in 1844, first attacked church-rates, by a motion "that effectual measures should be immediately taken for the abolition of church-rates," a proposal which commanded the support of nearly the same individuals and nearly the same number of votes as the Ballot and Reform motions —84. In speaking on this motion, Lord John Russell asserted that "he knew no argument for the abolition of church-rates which would not be equally good for the abolition of tithes." But something still more strange was proposed—a motion in favour of the six points of the National Charter; in proposing which, Mr. Fergus O'Connor informed the House "that the original Charter was drawn up by Daniel O'Connell, and signed by four or five members of the House, amongst them by the honourable member for Rochdale (Mr. S. Craw-

ford), by Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Hindley, and others." This motion itself having been seconded by Mr. S. Crawford, secured the illustrious patronage of 15 votes. In 1850 the Reform and Ballot motions were again introduced, when 96 votes were recorded for the former and 121 for the latter. In this year it is that we first meet with what is known as Locke King's motion, a proposal for reducing the county franchise to £10 occupiers, and which on its first introduction obtained 100 supporters.

The year 1851 brought with it two defeats to the Ministry on the same questions—Mr. Locke King's motion being carried by 100 against 52, and Mr. Berkeley's by 87 against 50. Wearied out, apparently, by those repeated struggles, Lord John Russell's resolution of "finality" was now forgotten in the promise of a new Reform Bill—the first of a series of miscarriages.* It was thus the noble lord foreswore all the engagements of the past, referred to in his speeches of 1837 and 1839:—"I can see no reason why, at the commencement of the next session, there should not be laid before this House by

* Upon what authority, and under what circumstances, Lord John Russell thus pledged himself; how far this pledge was the result of his own moral pusillanimity, menaced as he was by the Democrats; and how far the Whig party coincided in the conduct of Lord John Russell at the time: will be seen more clearly when the events of 1860 are discussed.

the Government a proposal in respect of this question of the extension of the franchise. In any changes we may make, I am satisfied that we ought to consult the spirit of the Reform Act, that we should not attempt to construct any fanciful edifice based upon any new theory of our own, but, building upon the old foundation, continually endeavour to improve the symmetry and add to the convenience of the ancient edifice." In reference to which pledge, Mr. Disraeli is reported to have said, "When not only the political party who introduced the Reform Bill, but the very statesman who framed, modelled, and ushered it into the House, gave up his own handiwork, he held himself to be perfectly free to consider the question, without reference to any antecedents as to whether he was opposed to the Bill in 1830 or not, but with reference only to those considerations which concerned the public welfare. For his own part, he entirely protested against what was popularly understood as the principle of finality. All that he would pledge himself to do, was to oppose any measure of Parliamentary Reform which had for its object merely the retaining and confirming in power some political section." In the same year Mr. Trelawney moved and carried the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the law of church-rates, &c., but the

Committee broke up without coming to any resolution.

In 1852, the first measure of Government was the new Reform Bill, the leading proposals of which, were a £5 occupier's franchise in towns, a £20 occupier's franchise in counties, abolition of property qualification, the addition of adjacent places to all boroughs containing less than 500 electors, and no absolute disfranchisement. Before the second reading, however, of this measure, Lord John Russell, having been defeated by an Amendment of Lord Palmerston's on the Militia Bill, resigned, and was succeeded by Lord Derby's first Administration. But hardly had Lord John surrendered the reins of office, than he began caballing with the Democrats, to whom and by whom, in office, he had been uniformly opposed. The Chesham House Cabal is as well remembered, as the Lichfield House or Willis's Rooms' Compact, and was equally disgraceful and disastrous to the Whigs. On the other hand, Lord Derby's ministerial statements caused the greatest disappointment and vexation to the combined powers of Dissent and Democracy. Thus spoke the Conservative Premier in 1852 :—"For the promotion of education and of religious knowledge among the people, I rest mainly and chiefly upon the exertions, the able,

indefatigable, and enlightened exertions, of the parochial clergy of the United Church of England and Ireland. I look upon that Church as the depository of what I believe to be the truth, and as an instrument of incalculable value in diffusing good here, and leading to still more incalculable good hereafter. I say it is not only the interest, but the duty, of her Majesty's Government to uphold and maintain that Church in its integrity, not by penal enactments directed against those who differ from her communion; not by violent abuse and invective against the religious faith of those whose errors we deplore, but to whose consciences we have no right to dictate; but by steadfastly resisting all attempts at aggression upon the rights, privileges, and possessions of that Church, come from what quarter, and backed by what weight of authority, they may." * * "Will you support a Government which will exert itself, moreover, to stem with some opposition, to supply some barrier against, the current of that continually increasing and overreaching Democratic influence in this nation, which is bent on throwing the whole power and authority of the Government, nominally into the hands of the masses, but practically and really into those of demagogues and republicans,—will you, I say, support a Government which is determined to resist

that noxious and dangerous influence, and to preserve inviolate the prerogatives of the Crown, the rights of your Lordships' House, and the liberties of a freely elected and freely represented House of Commons?" However, as with Sir R. Peel in 1835, Whigs, Radicals, Dissenters, and Irish Romanists combined,—aided, too, by the fiercest declamation of a new recruit in Mr. Gladstone,—proved too much for the Conservatives single-handed. Accordingly, in the autumn of the same year, 1852, the Conservative Government gave way to the Coalition under Lord Aberdeen.

In 1853, operations were resumed in a more resolute spirit against Church Rates.* But Sir W. Clay having proposed an amendment embodying the suggestions of Mr. Spring Rice's resolution of 1837, was defeated by 222 to 174. On which occasion, Lord John Russell uttered the striking admonition: "What I wish the House to keep in view is this—that this is not a tax that is considered odious and oppressive in itself, so that if you take

* This, in fact, was but the first of those annual incursions upon that domain of the Church, which, the session of 1857 excepted, continued for eleven years in succession, and during three successive parliaments: which attained their most decisive successes in 1859; then abated in violence, and ever since have proved a scourge only to the aggressors; until, in 1864, to spare further losses, they have been abandoned altogether.

it away, all persons professing to be Dissenters will be satisfied, but that it is in their view part of a system which is in itself odious and objectionable; and therefore by taking away this part of it, you will immediately produce, not a uniform state of peace, tranquillity, and contentment, but you immediately open the ground for some fresh attack upon some other part of the Establishment. It may be a wise policy, or it may not be a wise policy, to abandon these Church Rates; but I do not think the general who has to defend a fortress, is apt to say, 'I will abandon the outwork, and then the citadel will be safe.'" In this year the judgment of the House of Lords was pronounced in the celebrated Braintree case, which had been under litigation for some six years; in the hearing of which, Lord Truro laid down the theory of Church Rates as follows: "It is not now denied that it is clearly the common law duty of the parishioners of every parish to repair the Church. Whatever doubts have been expressed, I believe the opinion is now universal (I presume it is so among those who are well informed upon the subject), that it is a duty as imperative as any common law or statute duty which exists." On a subsequent occasion the same authority reiterated his opinion: "It is admitted," said he, "that the parishioners of every parish are under

an imperative legal obligation to provide for the necessary repair of the Church, and the expenses incidental to public worship." Lord Denman also declared that, "the levying of a Church Rate is not a voluntary act; it is imperative on the parishioners that they do repair the Church." Lord Cranworth laid down the law of Church Rates still more distinctly. "It is a part of the old Saxon *trina necessitas*, the repair of Churches, Roads, and Bridges." And Mr. Justice Cresswell quoted in support of the same view the statute of Canute in which occur the words, "*ad refectionem ecclesiæ debet omnis populus secundum legem subvenire.*" But ultimately it was ruled by Lord Cranworth and the majority of the judges, that "a rate must be made by a majority, and that no other rate is valid," an opinion which expresses the law as it now stands. Whilst disposing effectually of any grievance connected with Church Rates, this law, unhappily, leaves Churchmen wholly at the mercy of law-breakers. Lacking what Blackstone terms, "the most effectual part of a law—the vindicatory—the penalty attached to it," the common law duty, not only of the parishioners, but of the majority in vestry assembled, is too often rendered nugatory and barred by the contumacy of the minority; in fact, the present state of the law of Church Rates

starts out with the invitation—"resist the law—it won't be enforced." A majority in vestry assembled may act up to the letter and spirit of the common law, may vote a Church Rate as in duty bound, but their correlative rights of legal protection and aid in carrying out the law, are at present in a state of abeyance. Had Lord John Russell given effect to his avowed convictions of 1840, how different would have been the position of the Church Rate question now, and how infinitely more satisfactory the retrospect of the noble Lord's career as a public man. I must not omit to mention, that in 1853, a precedent was furnished for the secularisation of Church property, by means of the Canada Clergy Reserves Bill. This measure, vehemently supported by Mr. Bright, Mr. Hume, and Mr. Miall, was with no less ardour defended by Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and Government. It is now reckoned, however, among the other achievements of the Liberation Society towards separating Church and State in this country.

In 1854 "finality" was again repudiated by a second Reform Bill, so different from the proposal of 1852 as to contain only one principle in common with it, and that principle modified—the reduction of the borough franchise to a £6 rental qualification, and that of the county franchise to a £10 rental

qualification. No less than nineteen boroughs returning twenty-nine representatives were to be wholly disfranchised, and thirty-three others were mulcted in one member. Hence the Bill of 1854 left, with the vacant seats of St. Albans and Sudbury, no less than sixty-six seats for redistribution. Certain of what are termed "fancy franchises" were also introduced. However, as with the measure of 1852, this proposal of 1854 was regarded by the Democratic factions simply as an instalment; as in itself a mere trifle; and only not worthless because it would serve as a lever by which to acquire larger and more sweeping concessions. How this disastrous measure was buried in the ruins of a greater disaster, the Russian war, is known to all. In this year 1854 Lord John Russell distinguished himself by the most extraordinary of his many striking declarations relative to Church Rates. Sir W. Clay having proposed a Bill for the unconditional abolition of Church Rates, the noble Lord protested:—"I cannot confide in the assurances honourable members give us, that if Church Rates were abolished all sorts of ill-will and dissension would cease; and that with regard to all other prerogatives and privileges of the Church, there would be perfect acquiescence and contentment; and the Church might look forward to a state of happy and prosperous

tranquillity. I confess I have no such anticipations. On the contrary, I believe that this is one of a series of attacks that will be followed by other attacks of the same nature." In the June following, on the second reading, Lord John Russell's statement was even more emphatic and conclusive. "I say," he remarked, "that this unqualified and unconditional repeal of the present law of Church Rates is a proposal intended to forward the schemes of those who are the enemies of an Establishment, and are in favour of the Voluntary principle. There is one great principle, however, on the subject, to which I conceive the House ought to adhere. Whatever plan may be suggested, we must retain the Church as a National Church, and we must maintain the principle of calling upon the land to maintain the parochial church. I consider these churches not as the churches of a sect, but as National Churches; and so considering them, I hold that they ought to be inseparably connected with the land by which they have been hitherto supported. It would be the worst policy on the part of Parliament to consent to any law by which the hazard would be incurred of the village church falling into decay. Such is the principle which, against the honourable member for Manchester (Mr. Bright), I must ever maintain. The honourable

gentleman says, in opposition to that principle, that great effects have been produced by the Voluntary principle in the United States. I am not at all disposed to question that assertion. But I consider also that all the institutions of the United States are harmonious; I consider that while they have the Voluntary principle as to the Church, they have universal suffrage, they have no primogeniture as to land, they have an elective senate, they have an elective President, all of which institutions agree harmoniously, no doubt, with each other. But I say in this country we have other institutions. *We have a National Church, we have an hereditary aristocracy, and we have an hereditary monarchy. All these things stand together, and my opinion is, that they would decay and fall together. I must oppose this Bill, as, in my judgment, a step towards subverting one of the great and essential institutions of the country.*"

Sir G. C. Lewis stated, "I believe that the very judgment (Braintree case) which defeated the means of carrying it out, reiterated and confirmed the declaration of the legal obligation." On the other side of the question, Sir M. Peto declared that "the Nonconformists objected to Church Rates on two grounds. The first of these objections arose from the belief of the voluntary nature of every religious exercise;

the second, by reason of their strong feelings of the propriety of forcing parties to support religious services of which they disapproved." Mr. Apsley Pellatt said, "this was no longer a Dissenting question—it was a question of civil politics. It was not the function of the State to teach religion. It was an assumption of religious supremacy for the Church of England to require Dissenters to pay towards the support of that Establishment, and it was idle to talk of religious equality and toleration when such a state of things continued." And Mr. Bright, dilating upon the model institutions, of which hardly a wreck now remains, confessed that "He opposed the Church as a religious institution, and he doubted very much whether it was of any essential benefit to the country. That it was not necessary, was proved by what was going on in the world. In the United States there were no discussions of that nature, and they found that in that country they were able to do everything by the voluntary principle, which was done here by the voluntary and compulsory principles united. The ministers of religion were as well educated and as religious as the ministers of religion in England. They knew also that the religious impulse in America had done all that had been done by the religious impulse here."

The year 1855 witnessed the first triumph of Church Rate abolitionists. In 1854 the second reading of Sir W. Clay's Bill had been defeated by 211 against 184 votes; but in 1855, the numbers were all but reversed, 217 voting for, and 189 against, the Bill. On this occasion Lord Palmerston also spoke against the Bill: "I certainly do not," he said, "equally understand the scruple that prevents persons from maintaining places of worship which have from time immemorial belonged to the religion of the country. Viewing them as national fabrics applicable to the Christian worship of God, it really appears to me that there is no ground for this objection against contributing to their maintenance."

The year 1856, saw Church Rate agitation more prosperous than ever, Sir W. Clay's Bill having passed its second reading by 221 against 178 votes. On this occasion both Lord Palmerston and Sir G. Grey voted in the majority, but only on condition of introducing amendments in committee, the latter declaring that "the Government were not prepared to sanction the immediate and total abolition of Church Rates throughout the kingdom." Lord John Russell voted in the minority, still protesting, "Certainly I, for one, cannot assent to the principle that as a matter of conscience, Church Rates ought

to be abolished. The claim that Dissenters should not be compelled to make any payment to the National Church, has arisen in more modern times. It seems to me to be a part, but only a part, of the voluntary system." It was in this session also that Mr. Miall, who had succeeded Mr. Sharman Crawford in 1852, as M.P. for Rochdale, revived the parliamentary agitation against the Irish Church, but with no great success. Having moved "That it is expedient to make provision for the application to other than ecclesiastical uses, of all sites, glebes, tithes, rent-charges, and estates at present enjoyed or received by any clerical person of the Protestant Episcopal Communion in Ireland for the support of divine worship according to the rites of the said communion—but so as not to affect in any manner existing life-interests, and to pay due regard to any equitable claims which may arise out of the secularisation of such property," he mustered only 95 supporters. It is well known, however, that had Mr. Miall retained his seat, it was his intention to follow as closely as possible in the footsteps of Mr. Ward, and pester, if not argue, the House of Commons into some positive action, to the detriment of the Irish Church.

In 1857, many disturbing causes interfered with the progress of the Church Rates Abolition Bill,

but in 1858 this delay was amply atoned for. Sir John Trelawny having now taken charge of the "Bill for Abolition of Church Rates," the second reading was carried by 215 against 162 votes, and the third by 266 against 203.

On both occasions Lord John Russell voted and spoke against the measure as follows:—"You might very fairly say to a man, 'If you claim your exemption from this rate, you cannot come into vestry and vote upon questions relating to the mode in which the money obtained from it is to be expended.' I cannot quite concur with those who think that the majority in favour of the total abolition of this tax, without any provision being made to substitute some other means of securing the maintenance of the fabric of the Church in its place, is quite so conclusive as some honourable members seem to imagine. * * He must say he very much regretted that those who had charge of the Bill had shown so little disposition to accept the suggestions that had been made for a settlement of this question." Lord Palmerston neither spoke nor voted, but Sir G. Grey added:—"Believing the total abolition of Church Rates would be an arbitrary and unjust act as regarded the Established Church, he had suggested, in 1856, a course which he still thought it might be desirable to adopt. If Sir J. Trelawny's

Bill were rejected, he would be prepared to introduce a Bill founded upon the suggestions which he had made in 1856." And Sir G. C. Lewis, whilst agreeing in that compromise, declared that, "if Parliament were to abolish Church Rates by a compulsory process, the gain would accrue, not to the ratepayer, but to the landlord." On a motion of Mr. Puller, however, Lord John Russell was even more explicit, expressing himself as follows:— "With regard to the subject itself, he had only to say that he really could not understand how they could have a National Church Establishment without some provision or other for repairing its places of worship. They had such a provision both in Scotland and Ireland, *and it did seem to him that it was unreasonable to say that they should have a provision to maintain the minister, but no provision to maintain the churches.* He was ready to listen to any reasonable proposal for a substitute for Church Rates; although he felt great objections to the proposal of his right honourable friend the member for Morpeth (Sir G. Grey), he would be ready to consent to it rather than leave the matter as it had been, an occasion of strife. He was willing, he repeated, to consider any fair proposal on the subject, *but if they came to the question of an absolute abolition of the rate, he must vote against that, as a*

violation of the principle of a Church Establishment." But the most singular episode of the year in connection with Church Rates, was the precipitate renegadism of Sir J. Graham. On the second reading in February, and under the Whig Ministry, Sir James voted as usual, against Sir J. Trelawny's Bill. Before the third reading in June, Lord Derby, for the second time, had assumed the reins of office, and then Sir J. Graham at once deserted the post he had held so long, and which, as in 1837, he had defended so manfully. What was still worse, he abandoned his post contrary to his own sense of rectitude and justice; for, whilst voting for the third reading of Sir J. Trelawny's Bill, he proclaimed, "I am not one of those who think this question of Church Rates a question of religious liberty, and I am not prepared to admit the right of Dissenters to claim the abolition of this rate." Unhappily, the infection of perfidy spread, and therefore ceased to excite amazement. In the records of 1859 we shall meet with many such renegades, whose treachery, if did not save Sir James's reputation, at all events helped to keep it in countenance. The year 1858 was also remarkable as witnessing the first appearance of Sir J. Trelawny's Bill in the House of Lords, where, however, it was effectually stifled, by 187 votes against 36. But the

speeches delivered on the occasion add more than even the majority of votes to the verdict of that assembly. Lord Wensleydale said:—"In the full and satisfactory judgment on the Braintree Church Rate Case, it was distinctly laid down that there was at common law not an option, but an absolute and binding legal duty *on every parish to repair its church;* and no judge, in the course of the long discussions which have taken place in these late years, has even intimated a doubt on this subject. This legal obligation is analogous to that on parishes to repair all highways within their limits, save such as individuals are bound to repair *ratione tenuræ*, or a township by custom, or others specially exempt. Every one ought to obey the law, and is not morally excused from obedience by the chance of impunity, any more than a person would who should chance to commit a more serious crime, when he knew it would be easy to escape punishment."

The Duke of Newcastle:—"This question was treated by many as one of religious liberty, and by others as a violation of Church property. I cannot regard it as a question of religious liberty, for no man had a right, on religious grounds, to object to the payment of taxes. The Dissenter had no more right to refuse to pay Church Rates, when legally imposed, than the Quaker had to

refuse payment of taxes because a portion of them went for warlike purposes." Even Earl Granville, though stultifying himself by voting for the measure, was constrained to admit that "there appears to be no doubt whatever that, by the common law of England, there is a right on the part of the Church to the maintenance of the fabric of the Church by Church Rates." Earl Grey, however, in memorable words, declared—"I must express my great satisfaction at finding that, even among the noble lords who support the second reading of this Bill, there has not been one who has ventured to say that it is a just course to pursue, that a provision which has been made from a time beyond legal memory for the maintenance of churches, should be swept away, to the profit of the landowners of England. I should describe this Bill as a measure of injustice and robbery towards the labouring poor of the land. The labouring poor of this country are entitled to have their churches maintained by the land of the country; and yet that legal obligation is now proposed to be swept away without any compensation or substitute being provided. What is this but undisguised spoliation of the poor by the rich?" Equally pointed and forcible was Lord St. Leonards' judgment upon Church Rates—"It is the right of the poor at

the expense of the rich; not depending upon bounty, but upon actual legal liability. He who improperly withholds his assent, robs the poor. Your Lordships are asked to commit this spoliation for your own benefit. Your Lordships' estates are all charged with the payment of Church Rates for the benefit of the poor as well as the rich, and you are not at liberty to divest yourselves or your property of that obligation. If you did, the landowners of England would put millions of money into their own pockets at the expense of the poor throughout the country."

Finally, Lord Derby, then Premier, summed up the argument thus:—

"Church Rates are a tax which the Church of England has a right to receive upon the one hand, and which every landlord throughout the country is bound to pay upon the other, as a debt upon his estate, from the liquidation of which he must not hope to escape, upon the plea of conscience. I cannot, in point of principle, concur with those who contend that a Dissenter, as a Dissenter, has a right to be relieved from it. On a portion of my property the great tithes are owned by a Roman Catholic, but what would be said if I were to declare that I had conscientious scruples against paying tithes to a Roman Catholic, and should

therefore, refuse to discharge my legal obligation to him? The result would be that I should put the tithe into my own pocket, and under the pretext of preserving my own conscientious scruples, I should reap the benefit in my pecuniary interests. But *what is the difference in principle between the two?* None at all; but the tithe can be by law enforced against me, and the Church Rate cannot be practically enforced against the Dissenter. It is most important not only that this bill should be rejected by a considerable majority, but by so large and overwhelming a majority that it should be clearly hopeless to carry a bill for the unconditional and absolute repeal of Church Rates. Your Lordships will therefore hold out the best inducement to all parties to come to an understanding by rejecting this bill. I will venture to say to the Dissenters on the part of the Church, and I believe I may add on the part also of the Government, that *we will meet them with the most conciliatory and friendly feeling, but that unless some prospect is held out to us that we shall be met by them in the same spirit, we must maintain the law as it stands.*"

It was against such statesmen as these that Mr. Bright, in the autumn of the same year, levelled all the shafts of democratic malignity; but he took care to remember the Bishops as well. "There

is another kind of Peer," he exclaimed, "that creature of what shall I say?—of monstrous, nay, even of adulterous birth—the spiritual Peer." At the same time he indicated the shortest and readiest means for dealing with "that creature of monstrous, nay, even of adulterous birth." "I have not the smallest objection," said he, "to the widest possible suffrage that the ingenuity of man can devise."

Seeing that Mr. Bright assisted so materially at the inception of the Nonconformist; that he was one of the original promoters of the Complete Suffrage Union; that the Nonconformist started the Complete Suffrage movement; that it applauded the Chartist movement and the six points of the Charter; and that the Complete Suffrage and Chartist movements were regarded by it and the Eclectic Review as identical, and based upon the same fundamental principles—the principles enunciated by the Nonconformist—the declaration of Mr. Bright at Birmingham, in 1858, in favour of the "widest possible suffrage that the ingenuity of man can devise," was but an iteration of his sentiments at the outset of public life. But how is it that such opinions are systematically hushed up and suppressed, when Mr. Bright rises to plead for what he terms moderate measures of reform in the House of Commons? Here, however, I close my narrative for the present. It

remains only to take a brief survey of the ground passed over.

The proposition with which the Chapter started was—Dissent identified and in alliance with Democracy. That proposition, I venture to think, has been fully demonstrated. In the first place, the records of the Nonconformist newspaper established that proposition. In the second place, I have shown that the British Anti-State-Church Association was but the creature of the Nonconformist. Thirdly, I have adduced evidence which identifies the teaching of that Association with the teaching of the Nonconformist. From that evidence it follows, I maintain, that in its representative organisation, Dissent, in its very essence and nature, is not only revolutionary, but democratic and committed to democracy. Its principles and objects are perfect equality—the perfect equality of all religious denominations, and the perfect equality of every individual adult citizen, before the law. All the distinctive rights and privileges of the Established Church are to be extinguished, on the one hand; and on the other, the suffrage is to be granted as an inalienable birthright, as one of the natural rights of man, to every single person of adult age, not debarred by civil disabilities of his own creation. Are not such principles and objects, then, revolutionary? Are

they not, I will not say the manifestation, but the embodiment of democracy? By what chapter and verse of our history and laws can such principles and objects be made to appear either lawful or constitutional? But whilst the perfect equality of all religions, before the law, and the subversion of the Established Church, or the separation of Church and State, to produce that equality, is the first principle and object of Dissent, it is by the policy of perfect equality in civil rights that those principles and objects are to be compassed. It is by an invasion upon the Act of 1832 that the mission of Dissent is to be fulfilled. It is the creed of Chartism that is to lead to a consummation of the Anti-State-Church confession. On this subject, I would again refer to the quotations from the proceedings of the British Anti-State-Church Association, in the years 1847, 1848, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1856, and 1857. As, then, it is by organic democratic innovations upon the constitution of Parliament in all its three component parts—the Sovereign, the Peers, and the Commons—that the objects of the Anti-State-Church party are to be realised, so will it be found that that party has been mixed up in all the democratic movements of the last thirty years. Mr. Miall and Mr. Bright were conspicuous among the authors and founders of the

Nonconformist; and as the latter has avowed his agreement with the former on the State-Church question, so he has confessed to entertaining no objection whatsoever to the widest possible extension of the franchise. Mr. Miall and Mr. Bright were also conspicuous among the authors and founders of the Complete Suffrage Union. That movement, again, was accessory to the Chartist movement, or rather it was the Nonconformist which supplied the same fundamental principles for both movements. What was it, except Dissent, which constituted the flower and strength of the National Reform Association? It was also dissenting levies which recruited the ranks of the ballot-mongers. And to all those democratic movements dissenting chapels, dissenting pulpits, dissenting ministers, lent their willing, their best services. To draw any distinctions, indeed, between those movements and that of the British Anti-State-Church Association, is to distinguish between results wholly similar and identical. The Complete Suffrage movement was not one whit more democratic than the Anti-State-Church movement. Their fields of action are different—one being directed against the civil, the other against the ecclesiastical, institutions—but both alike are directed against the British Constitution, and both alike subserve the cause of

Democracy. What wonder, then, that the same organs, the same individuals, the same organisations, are enlisted in the common service of both? —that the Anti-State-Church Dissenter is invariably a Democrat, and the Democrat is as invariably an Anti-State-Church Dissenter?

But the inner mysteries of dissenting policy have also been disclosed. We have been admitted not to any partial glimpse, but to a full broad view of the secret workings of the Anti-State-Church party. When the Nonconformist preached up the new crusade in 1841, the enterprise appeared desperate. Sir R. Peel had just reached the topmost pinnacle of a noble and supreme ambition. The Church and Constitutional party were exalted to greatness, only too high to be safe. Dissent and Democracy emitted but faint and fitful gasps, the flickering flashes of quivering decay. The spirit seemed departing; first of all, therefore, it was Mr. Miall's mission to tend the invalid, to minister fit medicine and sustenance, to restore vigour and strength, and then summon the new powers to their high vocation. With this view he devoted himself to the circulation of democratic principles, the first elements of the new confession, which was to embrace all the articles of the common creed of Dissent and Democracy. Up to the year 1853, even, the mission of

the British Anti-State-Church Association was but to complete the work of tuition and organisation, dictated by Mr. Miall in the Nonconformist of 1841, 1842, 1843, and 1844. When that work was done; when the new creed had been propagated in all the large and populous districts; and when its promoters had satisfied themselves that the masses were on their side, and would, if they had power, support the Anti-State-Church movement; then Mr. Miall and his coadjutors established a parliamentary and an electoral committee, in connection with the British Anti-State-Church Aasociation, to manage Parliament and the constituencies. But their main object was the extension and reduction of the franchise, and the lowering of the standard rather than the extension of the suffrage. Thus, power was to be conferred on the multitude—on those classes, in particular, who had imbibed Anti-State-Church principles, as it was believed, and who had been instructed beforehand to use power, when acquired, in vindication of such principles. Not to alarm those already the depositaries of power, the old system of organic reforms in Church and State was abandoned; instalments were asked for,—such, however, as not to satisfy, but to beget a craving for more, and such as would confer both the will and the power to effect other changes. It was no longer

against the Established Church as a whole, or against the Bishops, that Dissenters and Democrats bent their energies, but against Church Rates. Mr. Hume's schemes of reform were discarded, and Lord John Russell's were adopted. For Lord John and the Whigs surrendered "finality" in 1852; but this surrender of the permanent settlement of 1832 was not the first nor the last act of apostasy of Whiggism. On the question of Church Rates, however, the Whigs, or, at all events, the Whig chiefs stood firm, and if the cause of Church Rates stood in need either of defence or elucidation, I would commit its safe custody to the guardianship of Lord John Russell's speeches, between the years 1833 and 1859. Whilst, then, the principles and objects of Dissent were essentially democratic; whilst indeed Dissent and Democracy were identified and allied together in the British Anti-State-Church Association, and were, in fact, but different names for the same principles and the same objects; the policy of Dissent underwent a change, between 1844 and 1859. The wholesale principle of innovation was exchanged for the retail principle. No one of the six points of the Complete Suffrage Union or of Chartism, not a single article of the Anti-State-Church creed was abandoned; but the whole were no longer demanded at once. A £6 franchise

was substituted for the six points, and Church-Rate abolition for State-Church abolition. And by conceding the former, the Whigs became accomplices in the plots of the Democrats, for a £6 franchise is only a means to an end, the first step down the inclined plane which leads to Chartism and Democracy, as well in ecclesiastical as in civil affairs. But, as was before observed, the apostasy of the Whigs from the settlement of 1832, was not their last act of the kind. The events of 1859 will introduce us to another repetition of that renegadism, which in 1835 turned its back upon the Irish Church, and in 1852 turned its back upon the final settlement of 1832, on reform. That third act of apostasy, however, marks another epoch in the history of Dissent and political parties. I shall, therefore, reserve my account of it for the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM 1859 TO THE PRESENT TIME.

DISSENT BOTH IDENTIFIED WITH, AND ALLIED TO, LIBERALISM.

I HAVE now arrived at a period so recent, that I may safely appeal to the memories of my readers to fill up any *hiatus* in my own narrative. Nothing is more curious and instructive, however, than the strange eventful history of 1859. In the first place, Lord Derby's Ministry made a fruitless effort to settle the church-rate controversy. The Abolitionists could hardly be expected to support a compromise; the Whigs were in opposition, and therefore factious; and the extreme section of the Conservative party held aloof. The consequence was the rejection of the Ministerial Bill by the majority of eighty-three. Soon after, in accordance with the sentiments expressed by Mr. Disraeli in 1851, a Conservative Reform Bill was introduced, the chief provisions of which were to retain the £10 franchise in boroughs;

to lower that of counties to the same standard; to transfer fifteen seats, but not to disfranchise any constituency wholly; and to extend the suffrage in boroughs by educational, lodger, savings bank, and other "fancy franchises." The fate of this measure is well known. Lord John Russell carried a factious resolution, which prevented a discussion of the Bill on its own merits on the second reading, and caused another general election. The great objection, however, to the Conservative Reform Bill, was its stopping short at the £10 franchise; its fixing that as the lowest standard of an occupation franchise, and reducing the counties to the same standard, with the idea of making the Bill a final and permanent settlement, so far as mere occupation and the privilege of voting were connected. And nothing proves the salutary precaution of fixing that as the lowest standard, better than the hostility kindled thereby among the various democratic factions. Mr. John Bright himself admitted that such a plan would oppose an infinitely stronger barrier to future democratic innovations than a £5 or £6 borough franchise. And as all Reform bills are merely regarded in the light of instalments, such, at all events, as come short of Complete Suffrage or Chartism, is it to be wondered at, that the idea of fixing the occupation franchise at £10, and never again tampering with it, excited the

irrepressible wrath of all those, who had for years looked forward to universal or manhood suffrage, the ballot, electoral districts, triennial or annual parliaments, and the payment of representatives, as to the only panacea for popular grievances in this kingdom?

Having thus committed themselves to Democracy in civil matters by leading on the Radicals against Lord Derby's Reform Bill, the Whigs began to drift before the same gale on ecclesiastical questions also. It was in 1859 that Sir J. Trelawny's Bill achieved its greatest success, the second reading being carried by no less than seventy-four votes, in a House of 410 members. On this occasion, Lord Palmerston acted as he had done since 1856—he abstained from voting; and Lord John Russell followed the example, but for the first time. By the time of the general election, however, Lord John Russell's life-long convictions on church-rates, all his emphatic and repeated protests against unconditional abolition, had vanished before the chance of a new coalition with Dissent and Democracy, and a return to power. It was on the City hustings that he first threw overboard the Jonah of church-rates. This was the form of his recantation:—"Being of opinion that the maintenance of the present law is not good for the country, that it produces much heart-burning, that in the view of Dissenters it is objec-

tionable on the ground of conscience, and that they have a dislike to the payment of these rates, I am of opinion that, providing means can be found for such voluntary collections as may be useful, church-rates ought to be abolished altogether." But in the county of Huntingdon his renegadism was more rampant, and more shameless. "A gentleman," he exclaimed, "seemed to be of opinion that I am not in favour of abolition of church-rates. I tell you I am." Surely the gentleman's mistake was a pardonable one after the emphatic protestations of Lord John to the contrary, not only in 1836, 1853, and 1854, but only the year before, in 1858. The case of Lord John was that of the apostle, whose speech bewrayed him, and whose denial stood in need of cursing and swearing, and then could hardly gain credence. The Willis's Rooms Compact, indeed, proved fatal to church-rates. There at length an alliance had been patched up between all the sections of Liberalism. The mighty rivals, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, were reconciled to each other, and to the Democrats, whilst the latter in turn—Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Baines, Mr. Berkeley, &c.—were for the moment conciliated by the promise that the next Liberal Ministry should be constructed on a much wider basis, so as to make room for a fair quota of aspi-

ring Democrats. Two other sops were thrown out to the Cerberus of Democracy—the pledge of a Reform Bill, which should satisfy its greedy maw, and the surrender of church-rates—another instance of that indissoluble union existing between democratic encroachments in State and in Church. When, therefore, Sir J. Trelawny re-introduced his Abolition Bill in the second session of 1859, and immediately subsequent to the accession of Lord Palmerston's Ministry, not only Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, but the Cabinet as a whole, deserted the Church, and gave to Sir J. Trelawny their unconditional support. To Lord Palmerston's Ministry, therefore, appertains the sole honour and credit of having been the first and the only Ministry in its corporate capacity, to abandon church-rates unconditionally and totally, and thus, according to Lord John Russell himself, to compromise not only the principle and position of the Established Church, but the safety and stability of the aristocracy and monarchy as well.

In justice to themselves, I cannot refrain from laying before my readers the reasons alleged in justification of such perfidy by the principals in the act. Lord Palmerston said, "I think I have never before voted for a Bill of this description" (Sir J. Trelawny's); but "I shall give my deliberate vote

in support of the Bill before the House. If it had been possible to continue that system, under which that object (maintenance of churches) is accomplished by a rate, I should have preferred that that system should be adhered to, but I cannot set my individual preferences against the force of public opinion." Sir G. C. Lewis said:—"As it seems true that in attempting to maintain the existing system of church-rates, we shall only be continuing a fruitless struggle, I am prepared to give my vote for the second reading of the Bill." Lord John Russell said —"The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Disraeli) says, that if we maintain that church-rates are utterly unjust and intolerable, we shall be justified in voting for the second reading of the present Bill. I make no such assertion, nor do I understand that my noble friend (Lord Palmerston) has made any such assertion. I do not think there is injustice in church-rates. We say, looking at the state of public feeling out of doors, and looking at the feeling of this House, that it will be better and safer for the Church to rely upon the voluntary offerings of the people, than to continue a compulsory rate, which is disliked by almost all classes of the community." But what is public opinion and public feeling? Contrast this theory of public opinion on church-rates as measured by the division

lists in 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, and 1863. However, whilst disclaiming any change of opinion; whilst declaiming, in fact, against the wrong and injustice of abolition, the Whig leaders in 1859 changed their votes in favour of abolition. The Whigs, indeed, may claim to have discovered a new principle in morals. They are the only penitents in whose case conviction is not the forerunner or the concomitant of conversion. With them the latter change anticipates and supersedes the former. But notwithstanding this wholesale apostasy of the Whig chiefs, Sir J. Trelawny's majority was less than before. On the former division it was 74; on this occasion it had dropped to 70. Thus the same year which saw the flood-tide of abolition at its height, saw also the waves receding. From that division on the second reading in the second Session of 1859, the ebb-tide has set in more and more strongly, till the majority on Sir J. Trelawny's Bill has faded away faster than it rose. In supporting that measure in 1859, I may add, that Mr. Baines confessed that "in discussing the question of abolition, he thought it only fair and right to say that he stood up avowedly as a Dissenter, and as one of those who did not approve the union of Church and State."

One of the means most effective to the change just remarked was doubtless the appointment this

year of a Select Committee of Peers, on the motion of the Duke of Marlborough, to inquire into the operation of the law and practice of Church Rates. Preposterous as it would be to affirm that any new light was cast upon the question by this committee, in presence of what has been advanced in this narrative, it is quite certain that to the majority of persons the disclosures made before the select committee by Dr. Foster and Mr. S. Morley, the Chairmen respectively of the Parliamentary and Electoral Committees of the Liberation Society, were entirely novel and equally astounding. Still, nothing was elicited which had not been professed again and again within the House of Commons, from the first session of the first Reformed Parliament, in 1833, downwards, and nothing half so startling as much that was published on authority in the "Proceedings of the first Anti-State-Church Conference" in 1844. In fact, to those who have read the extracts before given from the Nonconformist, the evidence of Dr. Foster and Mr. S. Morley before the Select Committee of the Peers, in 1859, will read as something altogether stale and flat, if not unprofitable. But as the latest confession, and from the lips of two of the chief potentates of democratic Dissent, the subjoined extracts may possibly repay perusal.

The Duke of Marlborough, Chairman; July 18th, 1859;—Mr. Samuel Morley, examined:—

"Q. 756. In fact, this question of Church Rates, as you present it, is but a small point altogether, as compared with the great question of the separation of Church and State?—[Answered in the affirmative.]

Q. 763. You have stated that there is a strong opinion on the part of Dissenters that Church Rates ought to be abolished, even as applicable to Churchmen?—YES, CLEARLY.

Q. 764. Would that apply to all Dissenters?—With very few exceptions, probably it would.

Q. 772. Still, do you look upon the abolition of Church Rates as taking off one link in the connection of Church and State?—UNQUESTIONABLY.

Q. 773. And a step in the direction of that ultimate object which it is desired to attain for the promotion of the interests of religion?—I quite think so.

A. to Q. 797. I have no hesitation in saying that, if a Bill were introduced into the House of Commons to-night, the object of which would be to charge upon *Churchmen* the support of their own places of worship, there would be opposition to it commenced to-morrow which would be fatal to the measure.

A. to Q. 842. I merely meant to refer to the fact that there is in every constituency a representative body of the views which I have put before this Committee. The particular Society to which reference has been made, has correspondents in every constituency, and there is a degree of co-operation with them, not on behalf only, I beg the Committee to believe, of mere noisy talkers, but of earnest, thoughtful persons, in every constituency and in every moderately large town; and there is a course of action which candidates understand perfectly well, and which is found to be operative on this particular question.

Q. 844. Does your Society send down individuals into different parishes in the country? —Not frequently."

The Duke of Marlborough, Chairman; July 26th, 1859;—Charles James Foster, LL.D., examined:—

"Q. 1507. May I ask what the objects are which your Society have in view?—*We wish to what is commonly called separate the Church from the State. We wish to take away all funds and property with which the State has endowed any religious denomination whatever.* We wish also to free all denominations of persons who may happen to be under special legislation, on religious grounds, from such special legislation.

Q. 1511. Do you include tithes ?—YES.

Q. 1519. Suppose that persons not conforming to the Church were exempted from the payment of Church Rates, would that satisfy the body of Dissenters ?—I THINK NOT.

Q. 1522. Do you think it is consistent with the principles of civil and religious liberty, for one part of the community who entertain one view, to force that view upon another portion of the community who do not entertain it ?—No ; certainly not.

Q. 1523. Is not that the course taken by your Society ?—Hardly that.

Q. 1551. Then, in fact, all endowments for Dissenting meeting-houses are quite as much public property as endowments of the Church of England ? —Under that condition they would be.

Q. 1613. Is it your impression that in the election of Members of Parliament there was any particular activity in the Parliamentary Committee as to those elections ?—Undoubtedly ; it is part of our duty.

Q. 1664. I understand the Society for the Liberation of Religion have formed no definite idea as to what would be the objects to which the property of the Church should be applied ?—I do not suppose that the Society considers that any part of its business.

Q. 1667. In fact, it is rather an object which

is held out as one of the intentions of the Society, than anything that they have substantially made up their minds upon ?—I do not admit that . . . Supposing our Society to continue, the accomplishment of our object will come before long.

Q. 1678. That is to say, you look upon the Episcopalians merely as tenants of the ecclesiastical edifices, without paying rent for them ?—Yes.

Q. 1679. I believe I am right in saying that the view you entertain of Church Rates is, that a settlement of the Church Rate question would by no means settle the objects you have in view, but that there are ulterior objects which you also wish to see accomplished, even although the question of Church Rates were settled to-morrow ?—YES.

Q. 1684. You are aware that the great fathers of Evangelical Dissent in England have been opposed to the separation of Church and State ?—Yes.

Q. 1688. Asked whether the original desire to see the separation of Church and State was likely to have been connected with any political movement ?—I think it not at all unlikely.

Q. 1691. I think the Committee understands that you give it quite as your impression, that if the Church Rate question were settled to-morrow, it would not tend to produce what I may call peace between the Established Church and the body of

Evangelical Dissenters?—It could not be regarded as settling questions in which we feel that we have an interest.

Q. 1701. With regard to secularization, do you consider the tithes now held by the ecclesiastical bodies to be national property?—YES."

But though no new information was elicited by the Select Committee of Peers, it answered a great purpose, nevertheless. It brought home to both Houses of Parliament and to the public the profound conviction that no terms could be made, no compromise effected, not even a temporary truce arranged, with the Anti-State-Church party. The rankness of its bigotry and exclusiveness shuts the door of reconciliation. Singularly enough, whilst that exposure was being prepared, the Church's enemies were engaged pretty much in the same sport as the brutal Emperor of Rome—in fiddling, by anticipation, over the ruins of the Established Church and our free constitution.

It was at the fifth Triennial Conference in June, 1859, that the Liberation Society appeared in its gayest colours. Never before did so many Radical M.P.s. meet under the patronage of the Anti-State-Church Association, and among them were Mr. E. Baines, Sir Morton Peto, and last, but not least, Mr. James Stansfeld, the friend and associate of

him who, in the nineteenth century, discovered the "Theory of the Dagger." Such is the society mixed up in, shall I not say, this conspiracy to assassinate the Established Church and the British Constitution? At this Conference the following episode occurred:—The Rev. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, having exclaimed—"*Let it be known that the State-Church robs the Queen of the right of private judgment*—that it is perilous to Protestantism and injurious to religion—that they believed it to be an evil system, which brought many of their neighbours to ruin," proposed to tack on to a certain resolution this addendum, "And at the same time this Conference would express an earnest hope that the Executive Committee will find it practicable to bring the great question of Church and State before the Legislature at an early day." Hereupon rose the Nestor of Dissent, Mr. Miall, and thus appeased the angry elements,—"The real fact is, there is a difference of opinion, possibly, between some members of the Conference, with respect to the wisest mode of accomplishing the great object of the Society. State-Churchism consists in the maintenance of certain principles that we believe to be antagonistic to the grace, truth, and life of the Gospel, and the embodiment of those principles in

certain laws and practices prevalent in the realm. And the separation of the Church from the State, if I understand it aright, is the abrogation of the laws in which those principles are embodied. *Our friend wishes us to take a faggot bound up; we wish to take the faggot stick by stick.* The only difference between him and us is a difference of mode in carrying our object into effect." Mr. Miall added, "The Liberal party had lost some votes at the last election, and this Association must, in some measure, suffer with that party's losses." Mr. F. Crossley "believed that throughout the country, at any rate in the West Riding, for every Liberal voter who was a Churchman, there were three who were Dissenters." Sir S. Peto "had no hesitation in thoroughly identifying himself with the Liberation Society." As another testimony to the position maintained so stoutly by Mr. W. J. Fox in 1857, and which has been so frequently brought before my readers, I shall append the resolution following—"That the Conference approves of the activity, vigour, and energy displayed by the Committee at the last two general elections (1857 and 1859), and urges the importance of continued effort to increase the number of representatives pledged to support the Society's parliamentary policy, and more especially it anticipates the increased responsibility, which will devolve

upon the friends of religious equality, *when, by an extension of the franchise, political power will be given to large numbers, who, it is believed, will be prepared to employ it in furtherance of the Society's objects.*" Let Churchmen and Constitutionalists mark that resolution well. It was in the session of 1859 that Mr. Dillwyn commenced his series of attacks upon Endowed Schools, his first motion being carried by 210 votes against 192.

In 1860 the first event to be recorded was the reappointment of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, which published during the session a second volume of evidence and its report. In the Commons, one of the earliest measures introduced was the third amendment of the Whigs on the final settlement of 1832, the great characteristic of which amendment was the reduction of the borough franchise to £6, and the county to £10 occupiers. The distribution of seats it scarcely touched; but, though furiously attacked on this score, the Democrats were willing to accept it rather than Lord Derby's Bill. It was the concession of a £6 franchise that constituted the attraction of the one over the other, and yet even Lord John Russell's Bill was regarded as nothing more than an instalment, only appreciable because it would serve as a better groundwork for raising up the edifice of the Na-

tional Charter. As with the Appropriation Clause, however, in 1835, so with the question of Reform in 1859. Each served the purpose of reinstating the Whigs to office, but after one ineffectual and scarcely serious effort to give effect to their professions, the Whigs abandoned both. One of the most remarkable episodes connected with the Reform Bill of 1860, was the disclosure made by Earl Grey. The Duke of Argyll, with characteristic assurance, having stated that Lord John Russell had no personal desire to take up the subject of Reform, Earl Grey proceeded to extinguish both culprit and apologist thus:—"I am bound to say that I think the original difficulty on this subject arose from the fact which is, I believe, well known to all your Lordships, although it may never, perhaps, have been publicly stated—namely, that Lord John Russell, as the head of the Cabinet, without any previous concert or communication with his colleagues, committed himself by expressing the opinion that the time was come when a change might be made in the measure of 1832. I believe when that announcement was made in 1851, it was not approved by any, or at least by more than one or two members of the Cabinet." Afterwards, Earl Grey, having "freely acknowledged that he made a grievous mistake" in not resigning

at once, stated that he consented to remain in office, because he knew the Government was on the eve of falling, and that the Bill had not the remotest chance of passing.

Here, then, we find the true source of Lord John Russell's discarding of finality. In 1852 he found himself *in extremis*. To conciliate the Democrats he abjured finality. The measure of 1852 was a piece of private speculation on his part, not approved of by his Cabinet. The Bill of 1854 was but the sequence to that of 1852. And the Bill of 1860 was at once a consummation and a contradiction of both. Such is the story of Lord John Russell as a Reformer on the non-finality basis. The year 1860, however, saw the line of operations against the Church considerably extended. Mr. Dillwyn again headed the invasion upon the Endowed Grammar Schools; the Bible Printing Patent was attacked by Mr. Baines; and Mr. Locke King introduced his "Liberty of Religious Worship Bill," which struck at the very root of the parochial system. The two latter assaults were foiled, and a Bill, the joint production of Lord Cranworth and Sir Hugh Cairns, was passed to meet Mr. Dillwyn's complaints. By this Bill it is enacted that no child shall be compelled to receive instruction in the doctrines of the Established Church, whose parents

object to the same, except when the terms of endowment expressly provide that such should be done. Mr. Hadfield introduced his Qualification for Offices Bill, which having passed the Commons without discussion, was intercepted in the Lords. Mr. Hadfield's object is none other than the repeal of the Declaration required of all officials of the Crown and Municipal authorities, in lieu of the Test and Corporation Acts, as was related in Chapter I. That Declaration was drawn up by Sir R. Peel, and fully approved of by Lord John Russell. Dissenters, however, as usual, having in 1828 obtained many and precious privileges upon certain conditions, now seek to retain the privileges and abrogate the conditions.

But the field of action upon which the supreme efforts of the Anti-State-Church party were exhausted, was the abolition of Church Rates. The business of petitioning was conducted on a fabulous scale. Thus ran the summons: "Up, friends, and at them. The moment for action has arrived. Be quick. Let no grass grow under your heels. Lose not a day. Get your petitions from every congregation, and let two petitions be sent within a fortnight from each place, one to the House of Lords, the other to the House of Commons. Sweep the congregations. Obtain signa-

tures, both male and female." Every means, in short, was used to erase from the memory of the Commons the recent revelations before the Select Committee of the Lords. All, however, was vain as Dame Partington's mop to stem the flow of the Atlantic. On the second reading of Sir J. Trelawny's Bill, his last majority of seventy fell to twenty-nine, and on the third reading that majority dwindled down to a solitary unit—to nine. Sir G. C. Lewis, as usual, voted for, but spoke against abolition. "The views," said he, "which I on former occasions enumerated, I still retain upon this subject, although I confess I have lost my faith in the probability of any reasonable compromise being effected. I have, therefore, come, reluctantly, I must admit, to the conclusion, that the best course to pursue is to vote for the second reading of the Bill which the honourable baronet has introduced." Mr. Bright said, "I am not about to try to take you in by allowing you to suppose that I agree with you as to a State Establishment for teaching religion. I agree on that abstract question with Mr. Miall and the Liberation Society." Did any person ever doubt that? Having been carried up to the Lords a second time, no more than thirty-one peers could be induced to support it, although the Duke of Newcastle, after the ex-

ample of his colleagues, reiterated the sentiments of 1858, and then voted for abolition. Lord Wensleydale, however, made a statement that will repay repetition. "His noble friend (Lord Lyveden) supposed there was no legal obligation on the vestry to make a rate, and that the majority had the option to make it or not. There could not be a greater mistake. The duty to repair the churches was as old as the time of Canute. The obligation on the parish, though enforceable by the spiritual courts only (by interdict), was analogous to the obligation of parishes to repair roads, or counties to repair hedges. The Ecclesiastical Court could now enforce by censure of individuals as contumacious, but the remedy was difficult and expensive, and could not be practically effective." It is almost superfluous to add that the Whig Ministry followed on in the evil course of 1859. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*, is the motto inscribed over the gulf of Democracy. One consolation, however, remains. So long as the Established Church was honoured with the heartless support of Whiggism, Church Rates lost ground year by year. No sooner did Whiggism openly turn recreant, after the Willis's Rooms' Compact, than the cause of Church Rates began to prosper, as it still prospers, despite the faithless hostility of the Whigs.

But in one respect Dissent achieved a notable triumph, though of the Pyrrhus kind, which, if repeated, would prove ruinous. It forced Government, against its better reason, to abandon the idea of a religious census. Why? We are driven to the inference that political Dissent is not the power it would have us believe it to be. At the annual meeting of the Liberation Society, the most noteworthy occurrence was a suggestion of Mr. Baxter, M.P., the same who was recently offered the post vacated by Mr. Stansfeld, M.P., to advocate the £6 franchise as a means of advancing the cause of the Liberation Society. Is not this the very object aimed at by Mr. Baines in proposing that reduction? It was in 1860 that, at a Conference of Ministers of religion of all denominations with the council of the Ballot Society, it was resolved, "*That it is the duty of Ministers of religion to use all the influence in their power amongst the members of their churches and congregations, and in their respective neighbourhoods, to promote the adoption of the protection to the suffrage by means of the Ballot.*" What next? Is the Ballot also a part of the Anti-State-Church Catechism for Sunday-schools? Imagine a pious discourse on the Ballot, and yet I doubt not many a sermon has been preached upon that text, from

the pulpits of Dissenting chapels, by "Ministers of religion!"

In 1861 the Church Rate struggle was renewed with even greater vigour and animosity. A series of Anti-Church-Rate conferences were held in the provinces, and a monster meeting in London. The Liberator urged that "it must be made patent to the least discerning politician, that the idea of perpetuating Church Rates is one which may be banished to the region of political dreams, or be added to the catalogue of bygone political follies." At a meeting at Bristol, a stronghold of the Liberation Society, we are told that "stress was laid upon the necessity for regarding the struggle as one between Liberalism and Conservatism, and for obtaining the hearty co-operation of the Government." Accordingly, at the conference in London many Liberal M.P.'s were present, and amongst the rest Mr. James Stansfeld, one gentleman recommending Dissenters to make Church-Rate Abolition "the testing point of the Liberal Government." Finally, a committee was appointed, which sat daily, specially to manage the Abolition business, and a fund of £3,000 was placed at its disposal. Nevertheless, all these preparations availed nothing. When Sir J. Trelawny's Bill came on for its second reading, it was carried only by a majority of fifteen, in a

House of 551 members. On the third reading being proposed, the ceremony was dispensed with. For the first time since the year 1854, the Abolition Bill was defeated in the House of Commons on its third reading in 1861. True, that defeat was only completed by the Speaker's casting vote—the ayes and noes being equal—each 274, but it was much more than a drawn battle. It was not only a disaster in itself to the Anti-State-Church party, but a prelude and an earnest of worse disasters to follow. The speeches of this year on the question were also remarkable, especially those of Lord John Russell, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Stansfeld.

But observe the contrast in their speeches. Lord John Russell put the question on the lowest grounds of expediency. It was to purchase a truce, say of thirty years, that he would abolish Church Rates. And to vindicate that concession to Dissent, he has now made another discovery, that by abolishing Church Rates the Church itself would be both better and stronger! He said, "The question is not one of mere abstract right; it is what will be most for the advantage of the Church of England. If such be the case, then I say it would be a great advantage for the Church—and it is an object which those who wish well to the Church ought to promote—to get rid of this source of difference between Churchmen

and Dissenters. As in the case of tithes and the settlement of Church estates, *I do not think any one in the House of Commons could, for the next thirty years at least, venture to make any proposition touching Church property, if Church Rates were abolished.* * * * * I know well what a Dissenting agitation is. I remember the Dissenters combined to put an end to the slave-trade, and afterwards to slavery, and I remember the number of papers they sent throughout the country to promote those praiseworthy objects. They will use the same machinery in this instance. At a general election the question will be fought upon every hustings, and the agitations will certainly be continued until Church Rates are finally abolished. But is it for the advantage of the Church that there should be this continual agitation? Can it derive any benefit or advantage from the continuance of such an agitation for a period of five or ten years? * * * * I believe that to be the case, but I do not believe that the existence of the Church depends on the existence of these Church Rates, and the sooner they are abolished the better it will be for the Church, and the stronger will be its foundations."

But Lord John Russell's fond dream even of thirty years' quiet, was rudely dispelled by Mr. John Bright. To abolish Church Rates, it seems, so far

from bringing peace nearer, would involve us in war fiercer and more ruthless, in which no quarter would be given, no account taken of the slain, so long as one single arm resisted. Abolish Church Rate, says Mr. Bright, by all means, for then we can march over the ruins of the outworks to the assault of the citadel. "I will tell the House," he said, "what Dissenters do object to, and how they feel in regard to this question. They feel it is a struggle for supremacy. The Dissenters regard this matter as a matter of supremacy. It is not as a matter of twopence in the pound they regard it. It is really a question of supremacy, and of supremacy, too, on the part of a great Establishment, which is as much political as religious; against which their forefathers have fought, and against which they are still inevitably obliged to contend. * * * * I am not going to argue whether it is a good thing or not, but to show that this matter has made a great impression on the minds of the Nonconformists for generations past; *and therefore anything which binds them to a subjugation to your Church, gives it a supremacy, or enables it especially to exact money from them, is a thing to which it is impossible for them in any shape to assent.* * * * * I assure the House in all sincerity, and I believe in my conscience that I speak only the literal truth—that every attempt

to settle this question, by leaving any shred of Church Rate unrepealed, will be a failure, and that the Nonconformists themselves will never abandon this question until a complete victory is won."

To the same effect spoke Mr. J. Stansfeld. "It had been said that the question of Church Rates, which in its inception was probably a question of conscience, had become a question of supremacy. He accepted the antithesis with this qualification, that the question of supremacy had been superadded to the question of conscience, which remained. He believed, indeed, that all schemes of compromise were vain, mischievous, and dangerous."

So much for compromise, and so much, too, for the chance of peace, supposing unconditional abolition to be conceded. Is it not better, then, to leave those spoiled children of the Liberation Society their old bruised toy? Why take away that, and give them another new one to bruise and break? Surely the old damaged article is good enough for such perverse and naughty children. Other measures, however, of 1861, call for attention. Sir J. Trelawney appeared in a new character. For the special behoof of free-thinkers and Atheists he introduced an Affirmations Bill, which, however, fell to the ground. Mr. Hadfield resuscitated the Qualification for Offices Bill, which again received its quietus in the Lords. Mr.

Dillwyn discovered another grievance in connection with endowed schools. His Trustees of Charities Bill provided that the trusteeship of such establishments should be divided between Dissenters and Churchmen, instead of remaining in the hands of the latter solely. In supporting Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Lowe, as the organ of Government, went so far as to justify this claim by reason of the concession to the children of Dissenters made in the previous session in the joint bill of Lord Cranworth and Sir Hugh Cairns. "If Parliament," he argued, "saw fit to give the children of Dissenters this right, is it not reasonable and fair that there should be some one on the Board of Trustees to protect their interests?" Does not that argument very much remind one of the moderation of the Anti-State-Church party? Is it not an instance of the old sophism termed *acervus* by the Romans, in its incipient stages? However, neither Mr. Lowe nor Mr. Dillwyn, nor Ministerial support, availed to save the Trustees of Charities Bill. Another new measure of this session was Sir Morton Peto's Nonconformist Burials Bill, framed at the special instigation of the Liberation Society. But neither that Bill nor Mr. Locke King's Liberty of Religious Worship Bill, which was introduced for the second time, commanded any large amount of success.

Mr. Locke King's £10 County Franchise Bill was more fortunate—gaining 220 votes against 248.

It was in this year that Mr. Baines, of Leeds, first brought forward his motion for the reduction of the Borough Franchise from £10 to £6 rental. A Dissenter of Dissenters; a hereditary Anti-State-Church zealot; born and bred in the closest atmosphere of political sectarianism; it would be but a shallow view of Mr. Baines's motion to regard it simply as a Radical innovation upon the Act of 1832, or as an engine of civil warfare only. To Mr. Baines and his coadjutors of the Liberation Society, the one great recommendation of a £6 borough franchise, is that long ago pointed out by Mr. Miall, and adverted to in 1860 by Mr. Bright. It is that so forcibly represented by Mr. Austin. Every extension of the franchise in the direction of universal suffrage tends to introduce it farther. The jealousy and ambition of the excluded classes are inflamed at seeing those in no perceptible degree of higher grade in the social scale, enjoying the privilege. Hence a £6 borough franchise would soon take us to a lower level. Its retinue presently would comprise not only the Ballot, Universal Suffrage, Electoral Districts, Annual Parliaments, and the Payment of Delegates, but the Separation of Church and State, as well. These, in fact, are

the avowed objects both of Mr. Bright and Mr. Miall. To these principles they have both consecrated their lives and labours, ever since the former canvassed his friends for funds, and the latter acted the part of commercial traveller, in 1840, with the view of starting the Nonconformist newspaper. But it is the £6 borough franchise of Mr. Baines by which those other ulterior designs are to be accomplished, and Mr. Baines is an accomplice in the plot. At its annual meeting this year, the Anti-State-Church Association threw off all disguise. Mr. Miall advised that "not one of the measures now before Parliament should be withdrawn, but it should be distinctly avowed that the main object of the Society is the separation of Church and State." Mr. J. Stansfeld, M.P., was another chief speaker. The Liberator of September, however, complained that when "Conservative politicians make zeal for the Church Establishment part of their stock in trade, the Liberal leaders are not yet convinced of the necessity for placing religious equality in their party programme." How the Liberation Society has since provided for the Liberal party will appear by and by.

In the Liberator of November, occurs a brief obituary notice, which may be interesting to those who remember the events I have narrated between

1840 and 1850. "The late William Sharman Crawford," we are informed, "was one of the earliest of the friends of the Liberation Society, and was not ashamed to unfold the separation flag in Parliament when the act was one that excited only ridicule, instead of alarm. And the latest communication received from him expressed a fear that the Society had not been of late sufficiently bold in the advocacy of its ultimate aims. We lament his loss at a time when he would probably have felt delight at the raging of a conflict involving the triumph of principles, rather than the redress of grievances; and, as these first 'Liberators' one by one drop off, we the more earnestly call upon others to catch the falling colours, and hold them aloft with all the bravery of the first standard-bearers."

Let us now revert to the incidents of 1862. Foremost amongst the Church's assailants appeared the redoubtable Mr. Hadfield, with his Qualification for Offices Bill, which again passed the Commons, only to be again rejected by the Lords. Mr. Dillwyn reintroduced, but withdrew, the Trustees of Charities Bill. The same remark holds good of Sir M. Peto's Burial Bill, though it differed from the bill of the year preceding. However, the interest taken in ecclesiastical polemics did not evaporate. It

was, in effect, concentrated upon Sir J. Trelawney's measure, which, on its second reading, was lost by a majority of one. Thus the reflux had set in at last in full force. First, the bill was lost in its third reading in 1861, by the Speaker's casting vote; and then in 1862, in a House of 577 members, it just failed by one, on its second reading. But Sir J. Trelawney again brought forward his Affirmations Bill, though with no better result. Mr. Berkeley and the Ballot also turned up again, but carried with them only 126 votes. The truth is, a change of policy has come over the Democratic party. Since 1841, Mr. Miall has inculcated a new creed, that a reduction of the franchise, and not the ballot, as was conceived before 1841, is the shortest and best path to Chartism, and to the separation of Church and State. And the correctness of that view may be deemed unquestionable, since Lord John Russell abandoned finality in 1852, and still adhered to the same idea of lowering the borough franchise in 1854 and 1860. The Whigs having conceded the latter object, but not being as yet committed to the secret ballot, the sun of the latter is on the wane, whilst the former has become the adopted policy of the united democratic section. Many indications, however, now confirmed the probability of a closer relationship between Dissent and

Liberalism. One journal remarked that "Dissent can make itself master of the situation, if it chooses, between itself and the Liberal party;" adding that, if a certain policy be followed, "we have no fear but that these seats will be won to the Dissenters, and will not be lost to the Liberal party."

This year, Mr. Miall, having been editor and conductor from the first, became proprietor and publisher of the Nonconformist as well. A testimonial also was presented him, in the shape of £5,000, and a service of plate, as a token "of the appreciation by his friends of his services during the past twenty-one years, during the whole of which period he has conducted the Nonconformist." This resolution may be regarded as the endorsement of all the views of the Nonconformist from its very origin. It shows, also, that Mr. Miall is considered at once the king and priest, the Moses and Aaron, the leader and spokesman, of the Anti-State-Church party. Mr. Bright's speech on the occasion has been already quoted in Chapter II., but besides Mr. Bright, the following M.P.s were present: Mr. T. Barnes, Mr. C. Gilpin, Mr. G. Hadfield, Mr. F. Crossley, Mr. P. A. Taylor, and Mr. J. Stansfeld, the two last being also the devoted admirers of another personage more notorious even than Mr. Miall—of Joseph Mazzini. Mr. Miall's new

position, it may be remarked, imparts to the Nonconformist somewhat more of the character of a commercial speculation. In this year a new Executive committee was appointed of the Liberation Society, which included the following choice variety—"Independents, Baptists, United Presbyterians, Quakers, Unitarians, Wesleyan Methodists, Methodist Free Churchmen, and Primitive Methodists,"—truly a catholic collection. The question of University Tests was also revived in a petition presented by Mr. Bouverie. Preparations were likewise begun for opening another campaign against that branch of the United Church established in Ireland. Among other publications of the Liberation Society, I find "The Registration Handbook for Counties and Boroughs, giving explicit information as to the steps necessary to be taken for a voter to be placed and kept on the register." At a conference of the Society at Bristol, one minister, after urging that "they should act by political means and political organisation," added that, "he would, however, assist the Society both in his congregation and in his Sunday-school."

But I hasten to the occurrences of 1863. Mr. Hadfield's Bill, supported by Mr. Gladstone, again sped its way through the Commons, to be again stopped in another place. Mr. Dillwyn's Trustees

of Charities Bill, "this very modest instalment of justice to Dissenters," was again introduced, and again withdrawn. But a trifling circumstance in connection with this Bill requires clearing up. No sooner had Mr. Dillwyn announced its withdrawal, than up rose Mr. Lowe, and read the hon. gentleman a lecture on the impropriety of introducing it. Mr. Lowe "regretted very much that the Bill had ever been introduced, and was, therefore, glad that it was about to be withdrawn." Contrast this speech with the one quoted in 1861 upon the same subject, and by the same author. How is Mr. Lowe's regret in 1863 to be accounted for? Was it that, like Falstaff, he thought he might safely stab the Douglas when he was down and dead? Sir M. Peto's Nonconformist Burials Bill was effectually stifled, but Mr. Gladstone gave it his vigorous advocacy. Sir J. Trelawney's Bill came up only for sentence more decisive than before. In a House of 564 members, the unconditional abolition of Church Rates was negatived by a majority of 10. On this occasion Sir J. Trelawney delivered a speech which deserves more than passing notice. "He wished to say once for all, that the views he held when he was a very much younger man, had some time since materially altered. If he were about to found a new colony, he would leave all religions in a perfectly equal

position, but it would be a very different thing, in an old country like England, to relax the bands by which the Church was held in subjection to the State. That opinion he had held for some time, although undoubtedly he did formerly entertain different views, which, however, as he had already intimated, he had retracted." If Sir J. Trelawney lives long enough, a similar recantation on the question of Church Rates may be expected. Meanwhile, it is satisfactory to know that the cause of abolition has lost in him a patient, courteous, and highly-esteemed champion. Two new movements, however, added to the business of Parliament; one directed by Mr. Dillwyn against the Irish Church, the other by Mr. Bouverie, against University Tests, and for the admission of Dissenters to the government and emoluments of the Universities, by the abolition of all subscription on taking the degree of M.A. Both motions were withdrawn; but with reference to Mr. Dillwyn's, I beg to append the emphatic protest of Sir George Grey: "The Irish Church," said he, "has existed for centuries, has become interwoven with the institutions of the country, and could not be subverted without a revolution. That revolution I, for one, am not prepared to recommend." What, then, is to be said of the Liberation Society, which seeks to subvert,

not only that branch of the United Church established in Ireland, but that which is established in England also, as well as the Scotch Establishment? And is it not by means of Liberal politicians that the Liberation Society calculates upon effecting its purposes? With respect, however, to Mr. Dillwyn's motion, for a select committee to deal with the revenues of the Irish Church, on the appropriation principle, or rather, on the principle of impropriation, and which has been re-introduced this session, is there no one to remind him of the Act of Union? Is there no one to propose that the following enactment be read again, as it was in 1856, on a similar movement being headed by Mr. Miall?

"That it be the Fifth Article of Union, that the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by Law Established, be United into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called the United Church of England and Ireland; and that the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the said United Church shall be, and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are by Law now Established for the Church of England; and that the Continuance and Preservation of the said United Church, as the Established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the Union; and that, in like manner,

the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church of Scotland, shall remain and be preserved as the same are now Established by Law, and by the Acts for the Union of the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland."

Is there no one to remind Romanist M.P.s of the fearful oath they swear before taking their seats?

The Oath to be taken by Roman Catholics.

"I, A. B., do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to her Majesty Queen Victoria, and will defend her to the utmost of my power against all conspiracies and attempts whatever, which shall be made against her person, crown, or dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to her Majesty, her heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against her or them: And I do faithfully promise to maintain, support, and defend, to the utmost of my power, the succession of the crown, which succession, by an Act, intituled, 'An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject,' is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring

any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming or pretending a right to the crown of this realm: And I do further declare, that it is not an article of my faith; and that I do renounce, reject, and abjure the opinion, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any other authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or by any person whatsoever: And I do declare, that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, person, state, or potentate, hath or ought to have any temporal or civil jurisdiction, power, superiority or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm. I do swear, that I will defend to the utmost of my power the settlement of property within this realm, as established by the laws: And I do hereby disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment as settled by law within this realm: And I do solemnly swear, that I never will exercise any privilege to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion or Protestant government in the United Kingdom: And I do solemnly, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, that I do make this declaration, and every part thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words of this oath, without any evasion,

equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever. So help me God."

Is there no one to remind the Jew of the oath he swears?

The Oath of Persons professing the Jewish Religion.

"I, A. B., do swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to her Majesty Queen Victoria, and will defend her to the utmost of my power against all conspiracies and attempts whatever, which shall be made against her person, crown, or dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to her Majesty, her heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against her or them: And I do faithfully promise to maintain, support, and defend, to the utmost of my power, the succession of the crown, which succession, by an Act, intituled, 'An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject,' is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants; hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming or pretending a right to the crown of this realm: And I do declare that no foreign

prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. So help me God."

Is there no one to remind those who made affirmation, instead of swearing, of their affirmation?

The Affirmation of Quakers, Moravians, Separatists, and persons who have ceased to be Quakers or Moravians.

"I, A. B., do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Queen Victoria, and to her will be faithful against all conspiracies and attempts whatever, which shall be made against her person, crown, or dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to Queen Victoria, her heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which I shall know to be formed against her or them: And I will be true and faithful to the succession of the crown, which succession, by an Act, intituled, 'An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject,' is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants; hereby utterly

renouncing and refusing any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming or pretending a right to the crown of this realm: And I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm."

Finally, is there no monitor to remind Liberal Churchmen of their oath?

"I, A. B., do swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to her Majesty Queen Victoria, and will defend her to the utmost of my power against all conspiracies and attempts whatever, which shall be made against her person, crown, or dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to her Majesty, her heirs and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against her or them: And I do faithfully promise to maintain, support, and defend, to the utmost of my power, the succession of the crown, which succession, by an Act, intituled, 'An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject,' is and stands limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants; hereby utterly renouncing

and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto any other person claiming or pretending a right to the crown of this realm: And I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. And I make this declaration upon the true faith of a Christian. So help me God."

Consider, then, for a moment, the purport and scope of all those oaths and affirmations. Every member of Parliament, either swears, or affirms in the place of swearing, to defend the Queen against all conspiracies and attempts whatever, which shall be made against her person, crown, or dignity. Now the Queen is the supreme head of the Established Church. Her coronation oath bound her "to preserve unto the bishops and clergy of the realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any of them." The Act referred to, in all the formulæ of oaths and affirmations, enacts, that whosoever should succeed to the crown should join in the Communion of the Church of England as by law established. The title to the crown, therefore, is inseparably bound up with the maintenance of the Established Church

of England and Ireland, as well as of Scotland. How, then, do those members of Parliament observe their oaths and affirmations to defend the Queen's person, crown, and dignity, against all conspiracies and attempts whatever, who support such motions as Mr. Dillwyn's relative to the Irish Church? How, again, do they defend the succession to the crown as limited by the Act referred to and by the Coronation Oath? How far do they respect either that Act of Limitations, or the Acts of union between England, Ireland, and Scotland respectively, upon which the crown and dignity of the sovereign of these realms are made to depend? The Roman Catholic oath is, indeed, the most comprehensive and the most awful: but no Dissenter of any kind, no Quaker, no Jew, no Infidel, no Atheist, takes his seat in the House of Commons without pledging himself, either by oath, or affirmation that stands for an oath, "without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever," to "preserve unto the bishops and clergy of the realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any of them," when they swear or affirm that they will defend the Queen's person, crown, and dignity against all conspiracies or attempts whatever, and

that they will maintain, support, and defend, to the utmost of their power, the succession of the crown, as defined by the Limitations Act. Lord John Russell once elicited a round of cheering by calling poor Fergus O'Connor's notice to the oath he had taken. What a pity his Lordship's memory never recurred to his own oath, when, to spite Sir R. Peel, and get back to office in 1835, he put himself at the head of the Irish Romanists, Protestant Dissenters, Democrats, and Whigs, ostensibly to carry the Appropriation Clause. And I would respectfully suggest that the same combination be reminded of their solemn oaths and affirmations whenever, as during the last and the present session, a motion be introduced to despoil and rob the bishops and clergy of the realm, and the churches committed to their charge, of such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them. Above all, it is high time to define precisely the position of those M.P.s who not only subscribe to the funds of a society avowedly organised to strip the Established Church of all its rights and privileges, but who add the influence of their name and titles to their subscriptions. How is such conduct to be reconciled with the oaths and affirmations made by them on taking their seats as members of Parliament? But what

shall be said of those M.P.s who, having accepted office under the Crown, have also made the Declaration referred to in the first chapter, as the substitute for the tests imposed by the Test and Corporation Acts? No wonder that Liberal politicians are so anxious to abolish tests, subscriptions, affirmations, and oaths, of every kind. But could any, except Liberal politicians, deliberately and wilfully bind themselves by certain tests, subscriptions, affirmations, and oaths, and then as deliberately and as wilfully violate both the spirit and the letter of those obligations? Upon this subject, however, something remains to be said hereafter.

Reverting from this quasi-digression to the session of 1863, only one more measure needs to be mentioned. Mr. Berkeley made another ineffectual attempt to carry his Ballot motion. In no previous session were so many motions brought forward adverse to the Established Church, but never before were her rights and privileges defended so resolutely and so successfully. A significant allusion to that effect is to be found in the Liberator of March. "Let it be observed, that, among domestic topics, scarcely any but ecclesiastical questions now excite attention, or create enthusiasm, either in or out of Parliament. Let it be noted further, that nearly all the ecclesiastical measures brought into Parlia-

ment affect unfavourably the legal and political *status* of the Church of England." At the annual meeting of the Liberation Society, Mr. Deputy Pewtress "suggested that electoral committees should be formed in all parts of the country to promote the return of suitable candidates." This, in fact, is the most striking moral of the session of 1863. It proved the utter hopelessness of prosecuting Anti-State-Church designs under the present Parliament. Preparations, therefore, were made at its close for renewing the contest under another and more obsequious Parliament. Scarcely had the session come to an end, when a new electoral policy was mooted. Scarcely was that idea bruited about, than measures were taken for maturing that policy, and giving to it the *imprimatur* of the Liberation Society. As a matter of course, the Nonconformist took the lead in this movement. But the secret of that new electoral policy lies in the following passage from a correspondent of the Freeman:—"We must make our nonconformity felt at the hustings. We have been too content to be a section of the Liberal party; we must aim to be more a party of ourselves, and to make Liberal candidates at the hustings, and Liberal governments in the House, neither of whom can afford to lose our support, feel that that support must be gained by

some respect and deference to the principles and rights we hold dear and sacred." Subsequently, the same journal wrote as follows:—"Looking, then, at the Liberal class—both the candidates and the great majority of Liberal electors—our task is to convince them, first, that we have religious principles on the question of Church and State which admit of no compromise, and which cannot on trivial grounds be held in abeyance. Next, that the creed of Religious Equality, which many of them profess, and which probably almost all believe to be the right one, points to the same conclusion as do our religious principles. Are, then, Liberal members of Parliament and Liberal electors ripe for the attempt to convince them? We are inclined to think they are." And later still, to this effect:—"We should like to see Dissenters everywhere awakening to their duties in regard to the next election. It may well come next year; it can hardly be postponed till two more sessions are past. We are perfectly certain of an attempt on the part of Church Toryism to oust every influential Dissenting member. No pains will be spared. A candidate's being a Dissenter, or his even having fought the Dissenting battle heartily as a Churchman, will be the ground of bitter opposition; and Liberal Church electors will be urged to put the

Establishment in the forefront, and to be shy of Dissenting candidates. Now, all this being obvious enough, what ought we to do? We answer, to make our appeal at once to our fellow-electors. The great object we take to be to bring our case thoroughly before our fellow-electors—to let them know that the so-called Liberal party has ceased to be of any value to us; that the advance of knowledge on religious equality demands a new position for the Liberal party, and that till Liberal candidates and their friends accept that position, we will no longer accept them. We need not conceal that we mean to open more advanced parallels, but if the Liberals will not accept, and accept heartily, that of religious equality, we ought no longer to serve their guns."

At length the practical meaning of all this counsel is brought before us. In November, 1863, a Special Conference was convened in London, for the purpose of submitting to its friends the views of the Executive Committee in regard to the future parliamentary and electoral action of the Liberation Society. The report of a sub-committee appointed to consider the subject having been read by Mr. Miall, the following, among other resolutions, was passed:—

"That this Conference requests the Executive Committee of the Society, immediately and energeti-

cally to employ all the legitimate means at their command, to prevail on those parliamentary electors who concur in the general objects of the Society, henceforth *to make such demands on behalf of their principles as may be warranted by their strength on the local registers;* and, in the event of refusal, to withhold support from candidates for their suffrages."

What the purport of that resolution really is, will appear from the following comments of the Liberator :—

"That policy, briefly stated, is this. It accepts as a fact that the present House of Commons will refuse to pass all measures having the establishment of religious equality as their object. It resolves to deprive the Tory party of the opportunities they have lately had of making political capital out of the defeat of an independent party, obliged to struggle against the apathy, if not the hostility, of the Government. It proposes an appeal from Parliament to those who make parliaments; and further proposes that the appeal shall not be delayed until a dissolution, but that the work of preparation shall be begun while there is time to prepare calmly and completely.

"And that the friends of religious equality may not fight as those who beat the air, they must be animated and guided by a distinct and firm purpose.

That purpose, while springing from one principle, will manifest itself in varied ways. It will prevent Liberal candidates going into Parliament without inquiry into the worth of their Liberalism. It will compel attention to subjects which would otherwise be ignored. It will check the tendency to regard the 'letting in of a Tory' as a calamity for the prevention of which principle may be sacrificed and self-respect lost. It will effectually dispose of the pretensions of trimming politicians who wish for 'an equitable settlement' of the Church-rate question, without pledging themselves to support the only measure by which it is ever likely to be settled. It will assert for Nonconformists, whose votes cannot be dispensed with, the right of insisting on an adequate equivalent. It will give prominence to principles too important to be always kept in the background for the convenience of parties or individuals; and, finally, it will give to the Liberal party a rallying cry which it sorely needs, and infuse into it a spirit of enthusiasm, the lack of which will sooner or later prove its ruin.

"In the next place, let the fact be noted, that no such Quixotism is intended as that of seeking to pledge the whole Liberal party to the separation of Church and State, or to any other 'extreme' views. Nothing will be asked for which cannot be defended

on its own merits, and which may not be granted, even by those who are opposed to our 'ulterior designs.' *We want, and intend ultimately to have, religious equality; but we expect to get it by a series of instalments, and not by a* coup de main.

"In the third place, it is proposed that the demands of voluntaries on candidates for their suffrages shall vary according to their strength on the register of the particular constituencies to which they belong. They will ask for much only when their numbers entitle them to do so; and they must do it all the more resolutely because of the number of constituencies where their numerical strength, or rather weakness, will oblige them to be content with comparatively little; the demand must be imperative, for if it be suspected that the whole thing is but brag and bluster, we shall meet with the refusal we deserve, and lose the influence we have, instead of adding to its strength.

"They who have made haste to prove that such a policy will 'overthrow the present Administration,' and will combine Tories and Liberals against the claims of Dissenters, surely prove too much for the cause they advocate; for if the Liberal party of the present day cannot hold together if there be *insistance upon Church-rate abolition, open churchyards, open universities and schools, and the ex-*

tinction of useless but offensive tests—why, then there is surely not much inducement to make sacrifices to keep it in existence?

"But we object *in limine* to such apprehensions, as being, to a large extent, groundless. *We do not believe that the majority of Liberal candidates will rather forego the possession of seats in Parliament, than come up to a religious equality standard of so moderate a kind. Electoral experience rather proves that they will, within reasonable limits, pay the requisite price, in the shape of pledges deemed satisfactory by those whose suffrages they seek.* And why should the price be fixed, as it too commonly is, by the few, rather than the many—by those who are careless about great principles, instead of by those who deem them to be precious?"

Here, then, is the new Electoral Policy of the Liberation Society, cunningly adapted to ensnare every Liberal candidate. The pledge is to vary in proportion to the numerical strength of the Anti-State-Church electors on the registers. But every single Liberal candidate is to be returned under some pledge or other to the Liberation Society. What those pledges may be in different cases cannot be precisely ascertained as yet, but "a religious equality standard of a moderate kind" includes "Church-rate abolition, open churchyards, open

universities and schools, and the extinction of useless but offensive tests." That these, however, comprise not all the measures upon which pledges will be required from Liberal candidates by the Liberation Society, is clear from the "hints to electors" recently published by that Society, in which the following among other "hints" are contained:—"The Irish Church Establishment has been condemned by the leaders of every section of the Liberal party during the last thirty years, and various attempts have been made to secure a redress of the grievance which its existence inflicts on the people of Ireland. As the discussion of the subject has now been recommenced in Parliament, candidates may reasonably be called upon to declare whether they will vote for the abolition of this worst of all the ecclesiastical establishments." But what matters a pledge more or less! The same authority which marked out that "moderate standard of religious equality," candidly informs us, "We want, and intend ultimately to have, religious equality; but we expect to get it by a series of instalments, not by a *coup de main*." One instalment, therefore, is of no great consequence, it seems, but still Liberal candidates are forewarned that the full tale of bricks will have to be rendered.

Such, then, is the last move of the Liberation

Society. Will Liberal candidates submit to such dictation? Let the monthly organ of the Liberation Society reply. "*We do not believe that the majority of Liberal candidates will rather forego the possession of their seats in Parliament, than come up to a religious equality standard of so moderate a kind. Electoral experience rather proves that they will, within reasonable limits, pay the requisite price, in the shape of pledges deemed satisfactory by those whose suffrages they seek.*" Such is the estimation of Liberal members in the opinion of the Anti-State-Church Party, who have for thirty years attached themselves more or less to that political party, and to which they look for the separation of Church and State ultimately.

It only remains to notice that this new electoral policy was duly approved at the annual meeting of the Liberation Society in May, 1864, in the following resolution: "That the Council approves of the decision of the Executive Committee to confine its Parliamentary action to defensive purposes during the remaining term of the existing Parliament. That, recognising the necessity for coupling with that determination early preparation for the approaching general election, the Council expresses its great satisfaction at the steps taken to secure the adoption of an electoral policy which will give

greater prominence than heretofore to the principles of religious equality, and will insist on a due recognition of those principles, as a condition on which support will be afforded to Liberal candidates."

In the report of the Executive Committee there also occurs the following significant intimation: "As a preliminary to other proceedings, the committee have already compiled an electoral history of every constituency in the kingdom during the last thirty years; together with a statement of the votes of every member of the House of Commons on the principal ecclesiastical divisions of the present Parliament. They have also made some progress in the collection of such local information of a recent date, as will enable them to afford any assistance which may be required by their friends in the several constituencies. It is to them that the committee must mainly look for the action which will be needed to ensure the success of the suggested electoral policy. That success can be realised by no centralised agency, unsupported by wisely-conceived and well-sustained local effect. It is in the constituencies that the struggle will have to be carried on, and it is with individual electors that the issue must ultimately rest."

Such then are the preparations of the Liberation Society for the approaching general election.

Proceed we now to notice the parliamentary events of this session. One of the first was the Oxford University Test Abolition Bill, proposed by Mr. Dodson, the design of which, like Mr. Bouverie's, is to admit Dissenters to the government and permanent emoluments of the Universities, although, at present, it is to apply to Oxford only. The second reading was carried by 210 votes to 190, and the motion for going into committee by 236 to 226. "The moral effect of admitting Dissenters to the governing body of the University cannot but be considerable, and may be expected to lead to other and more important changes in their favour." Such is the comment of the Liberation Society on Mr. Dodson's Bill. Mr. Dodson's Bill, however, is the only ecclesiastical aggression of the session which has challenged a division. The present House of Commons is not to have another opportunity of administeriug rebuffs to the Anti-State Church Party. Its thoughts and energies are now turned into another current—that of electoral rather than parliamentary action. I must remark however, that Mr. Dodson found his best man in Mr. Gladstone, whilst Sir W. Heathcote led the opposition to both. Mr. Locke King's motion for the reduction of the county franchise having been resuscitated, failed by 227 votes against 254, Lord

Palmerston's government at once condemning and supporting the motion. Mr. Baines's motion for a £6 borough franchise fared still worse, the ayes being 216 and the noes 272. What, however, it wanted in numerical support was amply atoned for by the vehement advocacy of a new champion. Not only did Mr. Gladstone throw his mighty ægis over the measure, but he ventured to declare "*that every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution.*" What, then, is the import of those words? This is the Times's interpretation:

"The aspiring genius of Mr. Gladstone, however, spurned all prudential considerations, and launched him into a discussion which is destined to form an era in the annals of party, and to influence most materially the remainder of his political career.

"Putting aside practical considerations, Mr. Gladstone bases his argument exclusively on the ground of equality and abstract right. He does not try to show that the country will be better or even as well governed. But he says that every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger is morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution. He adds, 'I contend that it is on those who say it

is necessary to exclude forty-nine-fiftieths that the burden of proof rests to show the unworthiness, the incapacity, and the misconduct of the working classes.' Surely this is the language of sweeping and levelling Democracy, of men who have emancipated themselves from the doctrine of the Right Divine of Kings in order to fall into the equally dangerous fallacy of the Right Divine of multitudes! This theory considers Government not as existing for the sake of the governed but of the governing class, inasmuch as it makes the admission to the governing class depend, not on the interest of those for whom the act is to be done, but on some previous claim which all men are supposed to possess to manage the affairs of their neighbours, unless some positive disqualification can be established against them. It is Equality against Liberty, Theory against Practice, abstract dogmatism against experience, a confusion between the end and the means. If the object of Government be simply to govern, it may easily be admitted that all men not subject to some manifest incapacity should as freely participate in this function as in air, light, and warmth. But if the object of Government be, as we maintain it is, the welfare of the governed, then we say that the only right to a share in the Government is the capacity to exercise that function, not

only for the benefit of the person himself, but of those whom he governs.

"We cannot wonder that doctrine so thoroughly unpractical, and resting on a theory so manifestly unsound, failed to secure the assent of the House of Commons, and we hope the day is far distant when this country, which mainly owes its progress to its steady adherence to practical views, and equally marked distrust of abstract reasonings, will entertain a Reform Bill based on principles of abstract equality, which the whole experience of mankind has proved to be groundless and mischievous."

Let us next see what is the opinion of the journal favoured with Professor Goldwin Smith's lucubrations, the Daily News:—

"Pall-Mall was in commotion last night. The Clubs had at last a new and genuine 'sensation.' Such running to and fro, such real political concern, such thirst for conference and condolence, had not been seen since the eve of the last general election. The fall of a Ministry could hardly have caused more stir than Mr. Gladstone's speech made yesterday afternoon on Mr. Baines's Borough Franchise Bill. The Chancellor had not very warmly supported the Bill, although he gave it his vote. But he had done what was thought worse. He had

unfurled and raised aloft what Tories on both sides of the House call 'the standard of domestic revolution,' but which the public will recognise as the old, long-lost flag of the Liberal party. It was with nothing less than consternation that the majority of the House heard the statesman whose character, abilities, and political rank mark him out as its future leader, proclaim that it is wisdom to bring within the pale of the Constitution as many Englishmen as are not incapacitated for the duties of electors. Mr. Gladstone denounced as 'most unsatisfactory' that period in the history of the present Parliament, in which so many of his hearers found comfort—the period which began with the conscious resolution to put the claims of the unenfranchised aside, and which has lasted until now. Parliament, he declares, has not done its duty to itself or to the unrepresented. It is for the interest of the country that the question of the franchise should be taken up, and not be relinquished before it is satisfactorily settled. In discussing the main question, he points to the fact that at present we have a constituency of which less than one-tenth is composed of the working classes, while forty-nine fiftieths of these classes are excluded from the constituencies altogether, and he declares that it is for those who oppose all change to justify this state of

things. The burden of proof lies with the Conservatives, because 'every man who is not incapacitated by personal unfitness, or whose admission would not be attended by political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution.' This grand principle, the corner-stone of Liberal politics, has been laid down scores of times by the greatest of our Liberal statesmen within these fifty years without exciting surprise. But affirmed yesterday in a House of Commons which was elected to pass a Reform Bill, but which had gulped all its pledges, it was nothing less than alarming. Its effect on the right side of the Speaker's chair was especially curious. While the main body of the Liberal party, including the representatives of the active and intelligent portions of the community, welcomed again the old familiar language, drowning Mr. Gladstone's voice with their cheering, the Conservative followers of Lord Palmerston were equally unable to repress their amazement and dissatisfaction. One eager Ministerialist, who was elected by just 326 votes, hastened to declare that 'he had already constituents enough.' Another gentleman, who represents the most progressive town in the North of England, spoke against the proposition as inopportune. Of one thing there can be no doubt; Mr. Gladstone's speech was a great disaster for the

trimmers who have been playing fast and loose with reform. It is in Mr. Gladstone's power to ruin them. We understand his speech to signify that at the proper time he will take the question of parliamentary reform heartily in hand; and if he does so he will conduct it to a triumphant success. The sufferers in the process will be, not so much the true Conservatives, for whom there will always be honest work to do, as the false Liberals. It will be a hard time for them when Mr. Gladstone takes the field, and already they have the sense to see it. The axe, they know, is being laid to the root of the tree, and a great deal of leafy barrenness will strew the ground before long. In the meantime, Mr. Gladstone, by his truly English and statesmanlike speech, has already conferred a great obligation on the Liberal party. He has done more than any other member of it to raise it out of the demoralisation and weakness into which it had fallen, and to give it an object and a hope."

It is the Star, Mr. Bright's organ, whence the next extract is culled:—

"The most persuasive voice that speaks the English tongue has thrown all its force and fervour into the advocacy of reform. Henceforth Mr. Gladstone is not only the most distinguished orator in the House of Commons, but the most popular of

all Englishmen. The University of Oxford may deprive him of the honour of its representation when it pleases. He is the representative of the unrepresented. He has been converted by Mr. Bright, as Sir Robert Peel was converted by Mr. Cobden. In the forty or fifty minutes of yesterday afternoon during which he held the Commons under a spell of enthusiasm or of hostility, our political history passed into a new epoch. In a speech of tremendous power and courage he proclaimed his adoption of principles that are either the most revolutionary or the most conservative, the most fatal or the most salutary, according to the point of view from which they are regarded. The extremest Radical below the ministerial gangway could not wish to hear broader doctrines enunciated in a bolder spirit. Chartism itself did not assert more than the title to the franchise of 'every man not incapacitated by personal unfitness or political danger.' If it be said that the qualification is ample enough to nullify the principle, we ask why the utterance of these words was received with a shout of alarm and abhorrence from the Conservative benches? In the mouth of Mr. Gladstone abstract propositions are living truths. As was remarked by Mr. Forster, the country knows well that he will not go back upon the path on which he has advanced.

If his splendid intellect has ripened slowly, it has attained the strength as well as the richness of maturity. Educated in the school of Conservatism, and a long time trammelled by the traditions received from his teachers, or by the self-wrought fallacies of his subtle brain, he stands at last free from even the fragment of his fetters, and perfectly devoted to the service of justice and of truth.

"This is an event of the largest promise. How far it commits the Government we are not careful to inquire. It matters little whether Mr. Gladstone spoke for himself alone or for the Cabinet whose head so lately held a very different doctrine. No Liberal Government can persist in a Conservative policy in the blaze of popular enthusiasm which Mr. Gladstone's speech is certain to kindle. He has advanced the flag, and there is no hand strong enough to put it back. In every town and village of the kingdom—in every workshop—and in every house of intelligence and labour—wherever the newspaper penetrates and thought is ever exercised on public questions—this speech of Mr. Gladstone's will be read with admiring gratitude. It will be the signal, not so much for agitation as for tranquil action. It will assure the people that they have at length a champion in the Cabinet itself, and that their claims will not again lack earnest advocacy in

the councils of the Sovereign. If the next House of Commons be not prepared to give effect to the principles which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has declared alike just, politic, and urgent, it will have to give way before a people with a Cabinet Minister for their leader. Patient, persevering, laborious Reformers like Mr. Locke King and Mr. Edward Baines are visibly nearer to-day to the accomplishment of their objects by five, or even ten, good years than they were yesterday. Gladstone has taken up the banner relinquished by Russell, and will surely plant it on the heights of success."

After this, I am anxious that the public should see the view of Mr. Miall and the Nonconformist, upon Mr. Gladstone's last appearance in a new character. Here, then, we have it:—

"Mr. Baines will be among the foremost to admit that the character of the debate upon his motion, in the House of Commons, and the importance attaching to it, are owing mainly to the position assumed by Mr. Gladstone. It was not that his speech was more logical, more persuasive, more symmetrical than those of some other members—for, in our judgment, he has often done better in these respects. But it was that he who may be looked upon as the most promising statesman of the future, and the man whose words have the best likelihood of

becoming facts, enounced the principle which lies at the base of all Parliamentary Reform, and gave Reformers a fresh glimpse of hope bright enough to dispel from their minds the murky atmosphere of despondency in which they have been enwrapped for some years past. * * * * We shall not go on to the end of the chapter in the present purposeless, capricious, hand-to-mouth style of legislation. The Liberal party will not continue to be a party without a principle, without a programme and without a bond of connection—nor, we trust, will it be without a recognised leader. Mr. Gladstone has put an end to the vague and unmeaning distinction between Liberal Conservatism and Conservative Liberalism. He has boldly drawn the line on either side of which men will hereafter range themselves in antagonism, according to their inmost political sympathies, instead of crowding as heretofore in pleasant confusion around a personage, whose position rather than his convictions commanded their temporary adhesion. Realism will be substituted for nominalism. A moral purpose will take precedence of dexterous shifts and a quick-witted diplomacy. Our best instincts will once more come into play in reference to our home politics. We shall be men again—not mere heartless triflers. Mr. Gladstone has sounded out the key-note of a

higher theme—and we shall be mistaken if the people do not take it up and draw it out into a grand and spirit-stirring national anthem.

"And what was it in the speech of the right honourable gentleman which cleared at once so broad an interval between true Liberals and Conservatives? Not his declaration of repentant feeling over broken pledges and forgotten engagements on the question of Parliamentary reform, though this is matter for congratulation. Not his generous appreciation of the good qualities displayed by the working men, and his disposition to confide in them —though this indicated statesmanship of a higher order. The words which have awakened such a loud echo from every part of the kingdom, are as follows: 'What I say is this, that *every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution.*' This is the ultimate principle upon which representative government rests. This is the standard which the Chancellor of the Exchequer accepts as decisive. Of course, *we* are specially gratified at his having thus reverted to it, for we laboured with zeal and persistency more than twenty years ago to get it recognised. But Mr. Gladstone would work towards this standard cautiously."

Such are the comments of four well-known journals upon Mr. Gladstone's speech. "Surely this is the language of sweeping and levelling democracy," says the Times. "He has unfurled the old, long-lost flag of the Liberal party," says the Daily News. "The extremest Radical below the Ministerial gangway, could not wish to hear broader doctrines enunciated in a bolder spirit. Chartism itself did not assert more than the title to the franchise of 'every man not incapacitated by personal unfitness or political danger,'" exclaims the Star. "The words which have awakened such a loud echo from every part of the kingdom, are as follows: '*Every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution.*' This is the standard which the Chancellor of the Exchequer accepts as decisive. Of course, *we* are specially gratified at his having thus reverted to it, for we laboured with zeal and persistency more than twenty years ago to get it recognised." That is what the Nonconformist said of Mr. Gladstone's speech. What, then, was the standard which the Nonconformist laboured with zeal and persistency more than twenty years ago, to get recognised? Was it not Complete suffrage, which meant Manhood suffrage? But did

not the Nonconformist also approve of Universal suffrage, and of an amalgamation of the Complete suffrage and Chartist movements, as being essentially identical? All this was set forth in the second Chapter, and I shall not repeat what is there written. But in presence of such comments, how are we to suffer the shuffling, shambling, jesuitical apology of a journal which would tone down Mr. Gladstone's Chartism to something neither extravagant nor extreme? Thus wrote the weekly organ of the Oxford Jesuits :—

"The profound sensation made by Mr. Gladstone's speech on the Borough Franchise Bill proves that it was either startling in substance or unguarded in expression. The House of Commons, the press, the clubs, agree that he has started in a new character as an advanced democrat. He is accused by the Times of being disloyal to his party, and of raising a flag of his own; and the papers which follow in the track of the Times take up the cry: others insinuate that he is *non sine Dis animosus*— that the chief who would certainly never have made the speech himself was probably consulted before it was made. Anyhow, and whatever the real history of the speech (evidently one which he had waited for an opportunity of delivering, and which was not produced on the spur of the moment), it is declared

on all sides that he has taken up a new position in the public eye, and is to be regarded henceforth rather as a Radical than as a Liberal.

"And yet the substance of the speech, fairly considered, is not extravagant or extreme. That some addition may reasonably be made to the number of working men—that is, of men having no property but their labour, who have votes—that this addition ought to be 'sensible and considerable,' yet not such as to give this class a 'monopoly' of power—that an increase such as was proposed by the abortive Reform Bill of 1860, or such as Mr. Baines proposes, an increase by about one-half, is not too much—that it is wiser, having satisfied yourself of this, not to wait till discontent drives them to agitation—this is little more than we have been accustomed to hear from Conservative members, when they find themselves on the hustings, and a Liberal party which is afraid to go these lengths has but a questionable claim to its title. They must be taken as qualifying his adoption of the broad principle, as it seems, that those who are fit to vote have a right to vote. That is a proposition of little meaning till we know what is meant by fitness.

"The true account of this outburst probably is that Mr. Gladstone is impatient of a course which he thinks, in his own party and in parliament,

insincere and timid towards the working classes: its abruptness, emphasis, directness, and breadth are very like what we might expect from him in such a case, and were probably in his opinion called for by the occasion and suited to it. He desires evidently to make it clearly understood that he at least is in earnest about the matter; and that if his party are willing to recede from what they have said on the subject, he is not willing."

Such is "the equivocation of the fiend, that lies like truth." But why surprised? Can Satan cast out Satan?

Other questions remain to be noticed. The Attorney-General's Church Building and New Parishes Acts Amendment Bill, which was introduced but referred to a select committee in 1863, after a severe and prolonged resistance from the democratic Dissenters, in the spirit of that discretion which is the better part of valour, has been withdrawn. Mr. Dillwyn has also renewed his motion for a select committee to inquire into the disbursement of the revenues of the Irish Church, with a view to their impropriation; but the motion having been repeatedly postponed, will again fall to the ground. Mr. Berkeley has also given notice of a renewal of his annual Ballot motion. The last scene of all is the notice of Mr. Hodgkin-

son, to call attention to the subject of Endowed grammar schools, and submit a motion thereon.

Thus have we arrived at the last stage of our journey. Here, then, let us halt awhile to take a brief retrospect of the march of events from 1859. In that year the Whig party again deserted its post, and went over to the enemy, not from any change of opinion, but from a desire to exchange the seats of opposition for those of office. A change of conduct or of party, based upon a change of sentiments, is rather to be respected than censured, but in all the changes of their changeful history since 1832, the uniform confession of the Whigs has been that their opinions still remained the same. So was it again in 1859, when they deserted the Established Church, and propitiated Dissent and Democracy by the unconditional surrender of Church Rates. Since then, every measure hostile to the Church of England has commanded in a less or greater degree the adhesion of the Palmerston Government, which will be remembered and execrated by posterity, as the first government that voted, in its collective capacity, for the total and unconditional abolition of Church Rates. Mr. Sidney Herbert, it is true, vacillated. Sir G. C. Lewis, it is equally true, invariably spoke against abolition, though he voted for it, as did other members of the

Cabinet. But Mr. Gladstone is the only Cabinet Minister who has both spoken and voted against Sir J. Trelawney's Bill since the Willis's Rooms compact, and the accession of Lord Palmerston's Government in 1859. And Mr. Gladstone has suggested that Church Rates should be surrendered in the towns. Besides, he has both spoken and voted for Mr. Hadfield's Bill, for Sir Morton Peto's Bill, and for Mr. Dodson's Bill; and the Liberator anticipates the day when Mr. Gladstone will come forth the welcomed champion of the cause of Anti-State-Churchism. Already, indeed, by his recent speech on Mr. Baines's motion, he has put himself in the van of Democracy. He is the chosen leader of organised aggression upon our civil institutions, and the history of the last thirty years, as recorded in these pages, proves how close are the relations between aggression upon civil and ecclesiastical institutions. Several subordinate members of the Government, the two Peels, and the Attorney-General, are also still faithful amongst the faithless found, upon the question of Church Rates; but then one Cabinet Minister and Privy Councillor, the Right Hon. T. Milner Gibson, figured in 1860 as a subscriber to the Liberation Society. And not only did he contribute £5 in money, but he lent the sanction of his name and position as a Cabinet

Minister and Privy Councillor to promote the objects of that Society. Neither is he alone in this capacity. Mr. Charles Gilpin, M.P., Secretary to the Poor-Law Commissioners, contributes both his money and the influence of his official position to promote the same objects. Need I add that Mr. James Stansfeld, M.P., late Junior Lord of the Admiralty, and a bosom friend of Joseph Mazzini, is also a strenuous supporter of the Liberation Society? That might reasonably be inferred, as the complement to his friendship with such a character. Yet the principles, the objects, and the policy of the Liberation Society are directly and intentionally subversive of the crown and dignities of the sovereign of the realm. It aims at the severance of the union of Church and State, and that union involves, by its own admission, "the requirement of the profession of a particular faith by the monarch," and "the religious sanctions to the solemn compact between the monarch and the nation at the ceremony of coronation being administered exclusively by the ministers of a particular faith." That that union includes much more immediately relating to the person, crown, and dignity of the sovereign, has been set forth before, but, confining ourselves to these two simple objects, "the requirement of a particular faith by the monarch," and "the religious

sanctions to the solemn compact between the monarch and the nation at the coronation," how can the Right Hon. T. Milner Gibson, and Mr. Charles Gilpin, reconcile their support of a Society founded and upheld for the repealing of the laws enacting those provisions, with the oaths or affirmations made by them on taking their seats in the House of Commons? How can they reconcile that support with the Declaration required of all who take office? How, further, can the Right Hon. T. Milner Gibson reconcile that support with the same Declaration made by him, and still binding upon him, as a Privy Councillor?

Here, indeed, the whole of Lord Palmerston's Cabinet is open to criticism, and as many other Privy Councillors as "exercise any power, authority, or influence they may possess, by virtue of their office, to injure or weaken the Protestant Church as it is by law established, or to disturb the said Church, or the bishops and clergy of the said Church, in the possession of any rights or privileges to which such Church or the said bishops and clergy are or may be by law entitled." For that is the Declaration required, "upon the true faith of a Christian," from every person on his being appointed a member of the Privy Council. Thus the whole of the Whig party has gone over to Democracy, and Liberalism

is committed to revolutionary projects both in Church and State. Long ago, indeed, the Democrats abandoned their policy of organic reforms, and met Whiggism on the ground of instalments, in civil innovations. Ever since the first democratic campaign upon the wholesale principle which closed in 1839, the fallacy of that system has been apparent. When, therefore, Lord John Russell introduced the retail system of reform in 1852, he conceded all that the Democrats could expect, although much less than what they demanded. And now the ambition of the Democrats soars no higher than the £6 borough franchise, as that would sooner or later involve all other democratic concessions. Upon this basis, then, of civil encroachments, the Liberal party has been for some years united. It is not the fault of the Liberals that a £6 borough franchise is not now the standard of the suffrage. It will not be Mr. Gladstone's fault if the Democrats do not hereafter extort something more. The same policy of instalments has been adopted by Democracy upon ecclesiastical questions. Ever since 1847, democratic Dissent has been a power in the constituencies, and since 1853 an electoral committee has been at work. But candidates were required to give their assent to the abstract question of separating Church and State, as the condition of being

recognised and honoured by dissenting support, or else the democratic Dissenters were content to give a general support to Liberal candidates, without exacting any pledge. That was the original electoral policy of the Liberation Society. But a new electoral policy has been framed, to come into force from and after the next general election. A specific pledge is to be extorted, if possible, from every single Liberal candidate. That pledge may vary in different constituencies. It is, indeed, to be of an order singularly elastic. It is to be regulated by the electoral strength of democratic Dissent. But the *minimum* standard, or, at all events, what is considered "a moderate standard of religious equality," comprehends "Church-rate abolition, open churchyards, open universities and schools, the extinction of useless but offensive tests, and the abolition of the Irish Church Establishment, this worst of all the ecclesiastical establishments." What, then, will not be included in a pledge of the *maximum* standard? However, the plan of instalments has been now adopted in aggressions upon the Church, as well as in those directed against the State; bit-by-bit reform is the order of the day in pulling down the Church, as well as in undermining the monarchy. In fact, the policy marked out by Mr. Miall in 1857 for Radical politicians, is now to be extended to

Liberals of every hue. Thus wrote the Nonconformist in the early part of the year 1857:—

"Radical politicians, we know, greatly dislike spending any particle of their strength upon ecclesiastical questions. They will have to conquer that dislike; for ecclesiastical questions will furnish the chief occasions of popular conflict for years to come. But for the strange and anomalous position occupied just now by the State Church—but for the evident fact that that institution is out of keeping with all our other institutions—but for its hatred of all change, its tenacious clinging to all abuses, its monopoly of honours, its disregard of common justice, its never-ending attempts at encroachment, its oppressive exactions, its grasping cupidity—we question whether now-a-days the middle classes could be got to take even a passing interest in politics. Upon no other subject can excitement be so easily awakened. Why, even in the House of Commons there is far more earnestness in reference to some of its phases, than almost any other matter can produce. Every one feels that it is the grand question on either side of which political parties will soon arrange themselves. It will be impossible to form and discipline a party without distinct reference to this. *Even parliamentary reform is chiefly desired on the one hand, and depre-*

cated on the other, as it is believed to bear upon the future destiny of the Church. The Church, in fact, although so seldom mentioned as such, constitutes the centre about which political feeling mainly revolves; and to profess a policy which has no reference, or but an oblique one only, to the State Church, would be about as successful an attempt to create and vivify a party, as to beat up for recruits in the name of philosophy.

"Of course we do not expect that our convictions on this matter can be safely thrust into a programme of policy. But, as we said before, a fundamental truth or two, stopping short of our ultimate aim, and yet broad enough to answer present need, will be found an indispensable feature of any manifesto which is designed to serve as a banner to the Radical party, and as a source of inspiration and a bond of union to its members. They will never gain either unity, discipline, or courage, until they can dare to face the greatest anomaly of the age—the Established Church. It is the only remaining enterprise capable of inspiring enthusiasm. The policy which ignores that is but the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out."

This, then, is the plan of the Anti-State-Church campaign. For some years the efforts of the Anti-State-Church organisation were confined almost ex-

clusively to the propagation of its views among the masses. Even now that constitutes a main object of the Liberation Society. The next move is to lower the franchise, to confer power upon those classes which have been already steeped in Anti-State-Church prejudices, and who, "it is believed," as the Liberation Society confessed in 1859, "will be prepared to employ the franchise in furtherance of the Society's objects." Mark also Mr. Miall's words in 1857: "'Even Parliamentary Reform is chiefly desired on the one hand, and deprecated on the other, as it is believed to bear upon the future destiny of the Church." Meanwhile instalments, bit-by-bit innovations, are also to be prosecuted against the Church. Thus will the whole Liberal party be ensnared and committed to active hostilities upon a small or greater scale against the Church. Thus two inroads will be conducted simultaneously upon the British Constitution, either of which, if successful, assures the success of the other. And to repel both when supported by the combined forces of Democracy, Dissent, and Whiggism, will be a work neither willingly undertaken, nor easy of execution. For the policy of instalments, as it is the most insidious, so is it also the most difficult to meet, and the most fatal. Many it deceives, many are disarmed by it, and some it actually conciliates.

It is thus that the duty of self-defence is underrated and neglected. Whence comes the danger? What cause for alarm? Who will do us any harm? These are the questions asked by all the crowd of easy-going Churchmen and Constitutionalists, whilst both the Church and Constitution are being gradually and slowly, but surely, undermined by a series of successive innovations, each of which in itself only just constitutes a sensible encroachment. When, however, the series is completed, then will come the *coup-de-main*, and then people will stare and wonder at that which is coming to pass, as though the catastrophe had not been hastened or caused by their own blind security, indifference, procrastination, and cowardice. This is what Mr. Miall himself has anticipated. "I venture to predict," he said in 1851, "that when the new Reform Bill is carried—when the House of Commons reflects with anything like faithfulness the national mind—then this question (of separation of Church and State) will suddenly emerge from its retirement; men will wonder whence its strength has come, and how it has grown up. We are very far from weak. The great body of the working people is with us."

Thus since 1852, by abandoning the settlement of 1832, the Liberal party has followed out the

beaten track of Democracy in civil matters. It has committed itself to what the Democratic party, both in the ecclesiastical and civil affairs, proclaims to be the initiative of other revolutionary and democratic measures, leading of necessity to the subversion of the Established Church and the monarchy. But since 1859 the Liberal party has also followed the beaten track of democracy in matters ecclesiastical. It has stood the ally of democratic Dissent in all aggressive onslaughts upon the Established Church. From and after the next general election, however, the Liberal party is to be committed still more deeply. It is to be bound over by actual, express, positive pledges to support the Anti-State-Church movement, in its own chosen policy of instalments at a time, and a *coup-de-main* at last. And what is the condition of the Liberal party? Is it in any position to refuse the terms of peace offered by the Liberation Society? Is it strong in numbers and in public estimation? Is it not, on the contrary, in that state which tempts it to purchase allies at any sacrifice of principle and pledges? Has not its position become weaker and more unstable since 1859? Yet in that year, to purchase the aid of Democracy, Church Rates were surrendered. Since 1852, then, I maintain that Liberalism has been an accomplice of the Anti-State-Church party, though

it may be that it was not for some years after that parliamentary reform was admitted to be chiefly desired by Dissenters, as it is believed to bear upon the future destiny of the Church. But since 1859 the Liberal party has assumed a position of wilful, deliberate, mercenary complicity with the Anti-State-Church party. Liberalism, therefore, is and has been, for some years, playing the part of accomplice to the Liberation Society.

The only question with respect to the future, is this, whether, from being an accomplice, Liberalism will become a principle in conjunction with the Liberation Society; whether it will not at the next general election sell itself wholly to do the work of the Anti-State-Church party, by pledging itself unreservedly to the line of policy marked out by the Liberation Society. But though connected with the future, that question admits of being answered without much doubt or hesitation. "We do not believe," wrote the Liberation Society's organ, "that the majority of Liberal candidates will rather forego the possession of seats in Parliament, than come up to a religious equality standard of so moderate a kind. Electoral experience rather proves that they will, within reasonable limits, pay the requisite price, in the shape of pledges deemed satisfactory by those whose suffrages they seek."

For once I cordially agree with the Liberator. My review of thirty years of Liberal government has satisfied me of this, at least, that one more act of perfidy to the Church and the Constitution can be but of little moment; that the Liberal party has so often promised fair and played false to both, that neither will trust it again; and that, therefore, the step from premeditated treachery to constructive hostility is not only easy, but natural. From and after the next general election, then, we may expect to see the scenes of 1835 re-enacted, when every section of Liberalism, Whigs, Radicals, Irish Romanists and Repealers, and Protestant Dissenters, were in full cry and hot pursuit after the United Church, and especially that branch of it established in Ireland. However, I also expect to see the whole pack whipped off again, and driven back to their kennels in pell-mell confusion and dismay.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT DISSENT HAS DONE, IS DOING, AND INTENDS TO DO.

WHAT the Liberation Society has done is thus set forth in its own words :—

"Of the Parliamentary grants for religious purposes which the Society has assailed, the *Regium Donum* in England has been withdrawn. A movement has also been commenced for the gradual discontinuance of the *Regium Donum* received by Presbyterians in Ireland. 'Minister's Money' in Ireland has been altogether abolished by Act of Parliament.

"The University of Oxford has been opened to Dissenters, and their right to take academical degrees at Cambridge has been recognised. The office of Principal in the Scottish Universities has also been thrown open to other than members of the Established Church. These important changes have been followed up by a movement for throwing open the use and management of the ancient

Grammar Schools to all classes of the community, without any sectarian distinctions—an object the realisation of which has become absolutely necessary, since it has been judicially decided that Dissenters are not eligible as trustees of educational charities, the foundation deeds of which require that the schoolmaster shall be 'an honest and discreet person,' who shall instruct youth in 'all godly learning.'

"The recent satisfactory changes in the Burial Laws—by which Dissenters have been brought nearer to an equality with the members of the Establishment, and have, in many cases, been saved the payment of large fees to the established clergy—have been effected chiefly by the Society's instrumentality.

"It was also mainly owing to the strenuous exertions of the Society, that the insidious attempt to secure a delusive numerical triumph for the Church Establishment, by a compulsory Census of the nominal religious profession of the population, was decisively defeated.

"The Society's electoral influence has also been considerable. It has stimulated registration, has repeatedly communicated with electors in most of the constituencies, and has sought to promote the return of suitable candidates. These efforts have

been put forth with much effect at the last three general elections.

"Parliamentary returns show that the annual amount raised by church-rates has in thirty-three years diminished by no less than *a quarter of a million*. The Society has contributed to this result, by giving legal advice and practical suggestions, and by issuing publications, which have proved most valuable in parochial contests."

But the same theme has been handled in more grandiloquent phrase by the author of a "Historical Review," before quoted, and which was "read at the Sixth Triennial Conference of the Liberation Society, May 6th, 1862." "To-day," says the Reviewer, "the society attains its eighteenth year, and, under a new and more euphonious name, asks the congratulations of its friends. Looking at the long, long struggle of our predecessors to obtain the beginnings of liberty, we can only wonder to-day at what it has been the means of accomplishing in whole or in part. It has changed the countenance of its foes, and turned the icy smile of contempt into the hot frown of angry rebuke. It has won the favour and support of many who looked doubtfully upon its youth, and feared lest it might simply provoke the hostility of good men without accomplishing a tittle of its avowed aim. There

were not a few who used to cry 'impossible!' whenever the separation of Church and State was mentioned: it has taught these to moderate their utterance, and to see that highly improbable things may be brought to pass when men conscientiously, earnestly, and persistently set about their accomplishment.

"But this is by no means the whole of what the 'Liberation Society' can point to as the results of its labours. No man can measure the light which for fifteen years it has been raying forth upon the great ultimate question all over Great Britain. Tens of thousands of Dissenters, and not a few Churchmen, have listened to its expositions of the principles of religious voluntaryism and freedom, and have either been confirmed in their judgment or convinced of the truth of its principles. Freed from the more sensible oppression of the Church, there was danger that Dissent should grow apathetic and content with its condition of mitigated bondage and degradation. Churchmen were only too ready to pat it on the back and praise its docile meekness; and Dissenters were apt sometimes to mistake this humbling patronage for a real Christian brotherhood. But there were fetters still to be knocked off, and a degrading, if not galling, inequality to be removed before any real and Christian unity could exist. Toleration had become an offence when

equality had been seen to be a right. Free to worship where and how we deemed right, we were also free to marry when, but not *where* we would, and must perforce accept the services of the Church in the most interesting of all the acts of life. Yet even here the Church used her power again to insult us, and in unwillingly loosing her hold of us at her altar, sent us to the poor-house for permission to be married elsewhere.

"Still, too, in hundreds of parishes the obnoxious and unjust impost of church-rates continued to be imposed. To attack this seemed to the Society a few years ago a point upon which its force ought to be concentred. You all know with what results. Thrice has the injustice been condemned by the House of Commons, and only saved to the Church by the voice and votes of the clerical influence of the Upper House. It has provoked the Conservative Church party to put forth all its strength; and so, for a little while, the day of triumph has been put back. But only for a little while. For peace, if not for justice' sake; from motives of policy and prudence, if not from any higher considerations, hundreds of Churchmen are now ready to give up what they see can only be retained at the cost of greater and more valuable things. To this end it is not in the least untrue to say that the 'Libe-

ration Society' has mainly contributed. It has aided Dissenters to fight many a successful Easter battle in the vestries of the country, and has led many an honourable member into the lobby with the 'Ayes' on the motion for the abolition of church-rates.

"Knowing, also, that it is in Parliament that this contest for our rights must be maintained, it has had the wisdom to turn its attention to the constitution of Parliament itself. It has ventured on the hustings, and taken no small part in those movements which lie behind the hustings, and has helped to send good men and true to give utterance to its principles where such utterance cannot fail to be felt. It has taken care that the old voice of religious freedom, which has been making itself heard in Parliament for two centuries, shall not only not die down into silence, but even more persistently and unequivocally make itself heard. That same voice, before which, already, many abuses have retired into the limbo of all great wrongs, is still crying its old cry, 'Equality for all, and toleration for none.' If truth be in the cry, who dare be sceptical of its ultimate success? If it be not a true voice, then let every true man here say, Let it fail.

"In seeking to amend the law of burial, the Society has been signally successful. In England

every parishioner can claim the right of interment in the parish churchyard, but no one but the Episcopalian minister dare to officiate in the burial of the dead. But, under the new burial Acts, in the parochial cemeteries which have taken place of the closed churchyards, the rights of Dissenting ministers are secured, and the laity are protected from the exactions of clerical and other parochial functionaries. Thanks to this legal change, the unbaptised Dissenter need no longer be buried like a dog, and the living are effectually shielded from clerical intolerance.

"Another, and that no slight gain, has been secured by the aid of the Society. For centuries the Universities, which are no more the private property of the Church than the dockyards or the parks, were practically closed against Dissenters. The Church stood at the gate of each college, and demanded to put her badge on the freshman's gown. You may come if you like, but you must come into this seat of learning by the porch of the Church, was her arrogant demand. Now, we can enter many of them by our own road, and without a Church badge, and earn our second degree without smothering conscience or paying the Church a heavy spiritual fee. The door is only half open to us, it is true. The Dissenting M.A. cannot hold a fel-

lowship nor be a member of the senate, nor vote in the election of the University members of Parliament. But the half-open door is a gain, which must ere long involve the rest. It is a concession to justice and right which virtually involves our whole demand."

Elaborate, however, as is that picture, it is still nothing more than an outline. To fill up the painting we must insert much more of light and shade. If not the originator, the Liberation Society may claim the meed of agitating with whatever success has accompanied the work all the following measures in succession:—An Endowed Schools Bill, Trustees of Charities Bill, Qualification for Offices Bill, Nonconformists' Burial Bills (2), Liberty of Religious Worship Bill, Abolition of Church-Rates Bill, Opposition to the Religious Census Bill, Abolition of Edinburgh Annuity Tax, Legalisation of Marriage with Deceased Wife's Sister, Oaths and Affirmations Bill, and Abolition of University Tests Bills (2). The Liberation Society also assailed the Bible Printing Patent, and if we cast our thoughts back, we shall remember that since the Reform Bill, at least two motions have been made in the House of Commons, for abolishing the Established Church altogether; that three several motions have been proposed, and carried to a division, for expelling the bishops from the House of Lords; and that the war

of the Appropriation Clause has lasted from the year 1834, up to the Session of 1864 inclusive, during which period it has set up and cast down cabinets, ministers and governments, both Liberal and Conservative. Another feature to be remarked is one best illustrated by the agitation directed against church-rates, grammar-schools, universities, and burial laws. Conscientious objections was the first phase of the Anti-Church-Rate movement. Exemption having been offered, and scornfully rejected, conscientious objections were proved to be a pretence, and something worse. We were warned by the Nonconformist in 1860, in no ambiguous words:—"Church-rate or no church-rate is a mere collateral issue. It is a mere trifle. It is nothing. It is the worthless counter for which we are playing the game that is to settle the future. In itself it is not worth the contest." In short, we are told that the Liberation Society "has now to persevere until the idea of a compromise is also abandoned." Churchmen, in fact, are to be forbidden to pay church-rates, and all in the name of perfect religious equality. But another step in advance has likewise been taken. A reckless and lawless agitation has been preached up. The Liberation Society has proclaimed that it "would specially recommend to all friends of religious liberty

throughout the kingdom, to contest the making of church-rates in all parishes, even where they may be in a minority; it being a matter of common experience that even the opposition of a minority may practically prevent the levying of a church-rate." At an abolition Conference in 1860, it was also resolved, "That the Conference, in the prospect of the continued resistance to the abolition of church-rates by Parliament, deem it needful that there should be new, systematic, and sustained exertions to facilitate opposition to the exaction in every parish in the country where it has not yet been abandoned." At the same time "practical directions to the opponents of church-rates," and suggestions "how to oppose church-rates," have been freely sown all over the country. In fine, the simple rule that has been propounded is this—"Prevent rates being levied when you can, and when that is impossible, make the process of obtaining them difficult and disagreeable." In other words, the Liberation Society proclaims—"Resist the law, and it will be repealed." Is there, then, no one to test the soundness of Lord Abinger's *dictum*, that "any attempt to excite resistance to the payment of church-rates, or to render those odious who call vestry meetings for them, is illegal?" But our view of the agitation is not yet

complete. Another aspect of the Anti-Church-Rate movement remains to be considered. The following resolution of the Liberation Society indicates the last idea in connection with church-rates:—

"That in view of the protracted obstruction which has been offered to the abolition of church-rates—the only settlement of the question which has received the support of the House of Commons and the country—and looking to the reasons assigned in the Lords for rejecting the measure, the Council requests the Executive Committee to consider the propriety of bringing before the Legislature the alternative which a successful resistance of Sir John Trelawny's Bill must force on their consideration, viz.: *to place at the disposal of the rate-payers, generally, those ecclesiastical fabrics which they are required to maintain.*"

Mr. Binney, according to himself, "a very moderate Dissenter, and in favour of a compromise," has illustrated that idea by a charming specimen of his own modest anticipations. "I am willing," he said, "to pay for the support of church-building, because it is national property; but then it must be on the condition that there shall be no connection between Church and State; but that *we* shall have the right to the churches as a part of the property of the nation. I would not make that property over

to a sect, but retain it as national property; and I anticipate, if I live long enough, having an opportunity of preaching in a church myself. The Dissenters do not want to charge the Churchmen rent for their buildings, but only to change the terms of occupation." Such is the fond anticipation of "a very moderate Dissenter!" If these things, then, be done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry? But surely, Mr. Binney expects to live as long as Methuselah! In like manner, the report of the Liberation Society for 1858 speaks of "the edifices of which the Episcopalians are the rent-free tenants"—a point further illustrated in the evidence taken before the Select Committee of the Peers in 1859. Such are some of the branches into which the Anti-Church-Rate agitation has diverged. Consider, then, the results. Those persons who go about parading their devotion to freedom and independence, and whose grand ambition, they say, is to liberate the Church, to elevate her to their own lofty privileges—these persons refusing to support churches, still claim a right to use them, and to interfere with their management. In the second place, these liberty-mongers having exercised, or having been allowed to exercise, the right of refusing church-rates, would deny to others the right of voting for church-rates, though both rights depend

upon the same law. Thirdly, by abolishing church-rates altogether, the Anti-State-Church faction would take away for ever from posterity the parochial right of levying a church-rate, and would, moreover, by exempting property from that liability, put millions of money into the pockets of the land-owners. Fourthly, if Churchmen and Constitutionalists venture to resent such dictation as that of the Liberation Society, and to exercise their parochial rights, they are to be brow-beaten into submission by threats of litigation and chronic agitation universally. And all this is to be done in the name of liberty, fraternity, and equality! Well may we exclaim, like the victim of the French Revolution—"O Liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name!" So fond, indeed, are those Anti-State-Church agitators of the article, that they are likely to turn monopolists in their enjoyment of it. They esteem it too highly to allow others to taste of it. But does not their liberty very much resemble a cloak of licentiousness? The same lesson, at all events, is taught by other questions, besides church-rates—the lesson that Anti-State-Church encroachments increase and multiply. This we also read in the manifold attacks on our grammar-schools, universities, burial laws, and qualifications for offices—all of which proclaim

the same truth, that Dissent can never be conciliated—that no concessions satisfy—that they fail to purchase even a momentary truce—that the Liberation Society goes from little to more—that no sooner is one point carried, than it becomes the base of operations and the rallying-cry for other demands, larger and more importunate. At this time a new agitation is being conducted in the north of England against Easter dues. But what has been done, and what looms in the future, may be gathered with even more minuteness from a speech of Mr. Miall, on "The Liberation Society—its policy and motives," delivered at Manchester, in the autumn of 1859, to this effect:—

"Now, when I speak of the union of the Church with the State, there is a large number of persons who seem to have in their minds an idea that the Church and the State are united by some particular Act of Parliament, and when that has been repealed that then the separation will be accomplished. There has lately been sitting a committee of the House of Lords, which has summoned different witnesses—one or two of them connected with the Liberation Society,—apparently with the simple view of making out this case: That we who are agitating the question of church-rates do not regard that question as all-important in itself; that as a

mere matter of pecuniary taxation it is paltry and indifferent; that we are fighting this battle as one of principle; and that when we have got the abolition of church-rates, that is only a part of our plan; and that we intend to go on to something else—to the separation of the Church from the State. This is, with all deference to their lordships, a very ignorant way of putting the truth. Why, we have been separating the Church from the State for the last thirty years, and we have done more than half that work already. The union of the Church with the State consists in all the Acts of Parliament affecting the political position of the Church of England. It consists likewise of those rights of inheritance, pecuniary and honorary, into which the Church of England has been introduced by the authority of the State. It consists moreover of all those customs that have the force of law; all those legal decisions, all those exclusive privileges and powers by which the Church, as an Established Church, differs from the other denominations by which it is surrounded. And in those things which constitute the ties—the interlacing ties—binding together the Church and the State, we have during the last thirty years been able to make great alterations. The first movement in separating the Church from the State was the abolition of the Test and

Corporation Acts. The next was the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Bill. Then there was the establishment of civil machinery for the registration of births, marriages, and deaths; and we have since had marriage laws passed giving to Dissenters the right to be married by their own ministers, or if they prefer it, to be married by the registration officer. The burial laws have been amended. We have obtained the abolition of Church Cess and 'Ministers' Money' in Ireland. We have obtained the secularisation of the 'Clergy Reserves' in Canada. We have obtained admission for Dissenters at Oxford,—and at Cambridge to all degrees up to that of master of arts. We have had Testamentary and Divorce Courts established, taking away from the Ecclesiastical Courts a large proportion of the business by which they were maintained. Every one of these acts was to some extent the separation of Church and State. So it is now. The one object we have in view is to put an end to all inequality in the dealings of the State with loyal subjects in consequence of their religious belief. We are acting simply the part of good citizens. We wish to establish universally the principles of justice, and when we have obtained one thing; of course we shall go on to obtain another; because those who object to this or the other act, in conse-

quence of its injustice, will have the same reason to object to any act which is an embodiment of injustice towards any portion of her Majesty's subjects. Politically speaking, it is a matter of necessity that we should go on. It is an incorrect description of our object to say that we are taking church-rates as a step to something further. It *is* something further. Every step we take is something further towards our object, and we shall never cease from this object, I hope, until the end has been accomplished, which we have set before ourselves, namely, to use our political influence, to the best of our ability, to put an end to all inequalities arising out of religious differences. When we have put an end to these inequalities, then there will be no connection between the Church and the State."

In unison with Mr. Miall's views is the following extract from a speech delivered at the annual *soirée* of the Liberation Society in May of this year (1864): "The Church Establishment enjoys now only the exclusive use of the ancient ecclesiastical property of the nation, the right to torment the parishes with church-rates, to seat its bishops in the House of Lords, to present itself to the public as the religion of the Court and Parliament, to take cognisance of our wills, and generally to throw social disparagement upon those who secede from its communion.

Well, is it not then true that when we demand the abolition of these last remainders of the establishment system—when we demand that the national property shall be used for national purposes, or leased out to its present holders at a rental which shall acknowledge the national proprietorship—when we demand that the social stigma inflicted on the free churches by the political favour shown to a single religious community shall cease and determine—when we demand that there shall be religious equality before the law, and that the bishops shall be sent about their proper business to their dioceses, we are pursuing a line of policy in direct continuation of that which has controlled the legislation of England during bygone centuries? Legislation has been steadily dis-establishing the Church; and the more it has been dis-established, the more it has prospered, and the happier has England become in its freedom. The remainder of this establishment system will have to come down, then, before long; and no earthly power can resist the influences which will achieve this consummation."

A Manchester journal, however, put the matter still more bluntly and explicitly. Speaking of the Liberation Society, it assured the public "they have not attempted to conceal that their ultimate views go much further than the abolition of church-rates.

They aim at a separation between the Church and the State; they advocate the abolition of tithes, the expulsion of the bishops from the House of Lords, the repeal of every law which gives exceptional privileges to one Christian sect, and the resumption of church lands, after the fashion of Henry the Eighth, save that the nation, and not a few favoured nobles, would be benefited by the transaction. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, these were the objects aimed at by the Liberation Society, and by nineteen-twentieths of those who oppose church-rates. On this point there has been no concealment. The chairman of the Liberation Society avows it most fully before the committee of the House of Lords, so does Mr. Miall, so does Mr. Bright."

In his latest publication Mr. Miall deals expressly with the question of tithes as constituting "*the* provision for the pecuniary support of the Church of England," and to prove the proposition that these endowments are "national property." He also expresses a hope that "at no very remote period from the present, the question will be, not as to who may be the rightful owner of the property, but as to how it may be best applied to the service of man and the glory of God." In fact, he candidly informs us, that "a full constitutional and equitable

right to dispose of the bulk of what is called church property, as, in its wisdom, it shall at any time see fit, is about to be claimed for the Imperial Parliament." The next question then to excite curiosity is, how and to what purposes church property is to be appropriated? The British Anti-State-Church Association taught that it "ought to be applied to strictly national purposes." The Liberation Society defines its object to be "the application to secular uses of all national property now held in trust by the United Church of England, Ireland, and the Presbyterian Church of Scotland." Is this, then, to be the limitation of the powers of Parliament in dealing with the Church's endowments, or would Dissenters claim either a share or a monopoly of those endowments, just as Mr. Binney claims a right to the churches? For my part, I confess to some suspicion that the "secular uses" above mentioned would prove to be the exclusive use and enjoyment of the Church's property by the dominant sects, if they should ever regain ascendancy—"secular" enough, to be sure, if their mission be to preach up Chartism and Communism. For the two mostly go together. That, indeed, private property is robbery is an obvious deduction from the theory of the right of the suffrage, unless it be rather the original axiom upon which Chartism

rests, and whence it starts. Seeing, however, that Church property is to be placed at the disposal of Parliament as being national property, let it be well understood what the term implies. It comprehends not only church-rates, Easter dues, tithe, glebe, parsonage houses, and churches, but episcopal and capitular estates as well, and it includes also all the honours and emoluments of our universities, colleges, halls, grammar-schools, and other public educational institutions besides. Whatever endowments are comprised under any or all those denominations, the whole of them are put in the category of national property, and the whole of them, therefore, are to be placed at the disposal of Parliament. Such is the object of the Liberation Society, with this additional proviso, that all such endowments are to be applied to "secular uses." Hence the following among other anomalies and outrages. Parliament is to set aside the solemn verdicts of the common and statute law, from time so remote that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary; wholesale spoliation is thus to be a rule in defiance of law; endowments are to be confiscated solely and simply because they are religious and consecrated to the spread of religion; a lawful and regular enjoyment of centuries is thus to be cancelled by the same authority which has been moved

by Dissenters to guarantee a prescriptive title of twenty-five years to them, even in the case of unlawful and irregular possession. The secularisation process, however, is not to be applied to that branch of the Church established in England first. Recent events confirm the moral of the original agitation, thirty years ago, in connection with the Appropriation Clause, that the Irish Church will be the first victim. This is not from any arbitrary choice or preference, but simply because that branch of the United Church, established in Ireland, appears the weaker and the more defenceless of the two. But when the experiment of spoliation has been once tried upon the Irish Church, it will soon be quoted as a precedent, just as the secularisation of the "Clergy Reserves" in Canada, a measure vehemently supported by Mr. Gladstone under Lord Aberdeen's Ministry, is now drawn into a precedent for other such proceedings. Let, then, the endowments of the Irish Church be secularised, and what will follow? What was justice to Ireland will be said to be justice to England. Let there be one rule and one law of secularisation, unchangeable and universal. Let the precedent of the Canada Clergy Reserves, and the precedent of the Irish Appropriation Clause, be extended to England and to Scotland. When, however, the secularisation

principle has been extended to appropriations, to all Church property held and enjoyed by the Church, and to which she can produce, as title, a prescription of fourteen centuries; surely the impropriations, Church property held and enjoyed, simply upon the prescription of usurpation for some two or three centuries, by laymen,—by Romanists, and by Dissenters, but chiefly by the great Whig families,—will be subjected to the same ordeal. What, then, is to become of the security of property generally? If the Church's title to her possessions be not good and sufficient, what defence can there be for private property, the best title to which is prescription for only one, or two, or three centuries? Possibly Mr. Miall's complacent and blissful ignorance may scorn the notion of learning. Proud boaster as he is, he has not hesitated to charge upon "thousands of clergymen" and Churchmen his own particular vices of "hollow and loud-sounding assumptions," "perpetual iteration," "unfounded *dicta* of preposterous baselessness," "unfounded allegations," "entire ignorance of the facts of the case," and other such faults and failings, subjective and objective. But what has he to reply to Lord Brougham's opinion—"I think the right of the Church in the property it enjoys, as sacred as the rights of individuals to their estates and freeholds; and that the

parson of the parish has as good a right to the tenth of the produce of the soil, as the body of the proprietors have to the other nine-tenths"? When, then, Mr. Miall claims for the Imperial Parliament a full, constitutional, and equitable right to dispose of tithe and Church property in general, does he not claim to be the chief apostle of Socialism and Communism? Does he not, in reality, claim a right to loosen all the bonds of security; to unsettle all the principles of our common law, which is but the code of prescription; to abolish the institution of private property, and thus to reduce England to the condition of France during the worst excesses of the most lawless of revolutions? Yet Mr. Miall's assurance has carried him even beyond this point; beyond, that is, the mere assertion of his claim.

Even the particular line of confiscation has been drawn. Mr. Miall, speaking for himself and the Anti-State-Church party, said, "What we require is, that when the present incumbent shall depart this life, the successor shall not be appointed, and that the funds should be sequestrated to the use of the civil government." But enough of what the Liberation Society purports to do with the Church, and all that belongs to her, from tithe down to edifices. What is not so well known,

nor so openly professed, but what I deem to be equally certain, is the untimely fate that awaits our civil institutions, as well as the Church, if the avowed designs of the Liberation Society upon the latter once come to pass. Upon this head, I would call as testimony the prophetic words of Lord John Russell himself, spoken in the year 1854. That, indeed, in our constitutional monarchy the Established Church is an essential part, and that, therefore, the subversion of the latter would eventually bring about the overthrow of the former, will hardly be questioned by those who ponder over the history of the seventeenth century. But, as if to make surety doubly sure, the Anti-State-Church party have taken every care that no misapprehension should exist on this point. That the principle of an hereditary aristocracy is not only obnoxious, but repulsive and antagonistic, to the tastes and views of Anti-State-Church agitators, will generally be admitted by all who have perused the preceding pages. That principle is always identified with the principle of an Established Church, and both together, united with monarchy, are contrasted with the principle of Dissent, which is Democracy. Upon this subject, no better authority can be consulted than the Liberation Society's tract, "Duties of Sunday-school Teachers in relation to State

Churches." Addressing that class of persons, the tract proceeds: "There is, as you are well aware, an Established Church in this country; it is founded upon the deep feelings of the people; it has allied itself to the throne, giving and taking support; it is more than favoured by an aristocracy of high descent, vast possessions, and illustrious names." Sunday-school teachers are then instructed how to proceed. "You must teach Dissent dogmatically, or on your own word. Before your scholars can enter into the reasons of Dissent, you must tell them it is right and true. Speak of it as something in accordance with the will of God. Let your scholars feel that you consider separation from state churches as highly pleasing to Christ. Tell them that national establishments of religion are sinful, are wrong in themselves and in all their workings." Sunday-school teachers are further directed thus: "You must teach Dissent logically, or by reasoning. You must further point out how the State Church, as the ecclesiastical antithesis of Dissent, is the practical denial," &c. Mark the contrast: The Church is allied to the throne, giving and taking support. It is also more than favoured by the aristocracy. But Dissent is not only something different; it is the ecclesiastical antithesis of the State Church. And this teaching is to be inculcated

in "Sabbath-schools." Dissent then, by its own confession is, and claims to be inculcated, as something antithetical not only to the State Church, but to the monarchy, with which it is allied, and to the aristocracy, by which it is favoured. I have other viands, however, to set before the reader, still more savoury and delicious. I have touched upon the point before; but few, I imagine, are they who consider to appreciate the tender, sympathetic anxiety which, like "medicinal gum," distils from Anti-State-Church treatises upon the heads of the hapless sovereigns of this realm of England. 'Tis a horrible tale that I have now to unfold. The original contract between the sovereign and people, writes that monster Blackstone, is now couched in the Coronation Oath, by which, at his accession, every king binds himself to preserve unto the United Church of England and Ireland, and unto the Established Church of Scotland, "all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them." By the Limitation Act (12 & 13 Wm. III.), it is further enacted, that the inheritance to the crown is conditional, "being limited to such heirs only of the body of the Princess Sophia as are Protestant members of the Church of England, and are married to none but Protestants." There can be no mistake, then, about the

relative positions of the sovereign and the Established Church. On the last revision of the Constitution, immediately consequent upon the Revolution of 1688, it was settled finally and conclusively, that whoever should come to the possession of the crown, he or she should take and subscribe an oath to maintain the Established Churches of the realm, and should also be required to join in the Communion of the Church of England, as by law established. Now, what a hardship is here: "the requirement of the profession of a particular faith by the monarch," as the British Anti-State-Church Association so feelingly expressed itself in 1844. As is stated more at length in pages 49 and 50 of the "Proceedings of the first Anti-State-Church Conference," in that year.

"The throne itself is not free: our Constitution associates it with the Church,—and for most of the purposes which the institution properly contemplates, and which, if it were disposed and able to effect, would command for it unbounded veneration, and engage to it the affections of all hearts, the throne is injured by the association. Maintained for the protection of the rights of all, it is bound, and pinioned, and deprived of the free exercise of its power, by an ecclesiastical corporation, which, besides imposing upon the sovereign an oath 'to

preserve unto the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland, and to the united Church committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them or any of them,' exerts a most mischievously restrictive influence upon the crown, in respect to the business of legislation, the distribution of honours, the administration of law, and the discharge of the commonest magisterial functions. It thus happens, that all measures submitted by the Cabinet to the Legislature must be squared to coincide with the interests of a privileged class—that plans of polity, recommended by the most enlarged views of what is demanded by the exigencies of the state, must be pared down, lest they should jostle against ecclesiastical prejudices—and that the soundest principles must be rejected whenever their adoption would seem to threaten clerical exclusiveness, or to arouse clerical alarm. In the choice of its policy, as well as of its servants, the throne of Great Britain and Ireland is practically under bondage to the Church."

In another publication, originally issued at Manchester in 1861, but now advertised among the other productions of the Liberation Society, occurs the following piece of sublimity:—

"The sovereign of the realm has no more loyal

subjects than the Dissenters, though the members of the Church of England disingenuously represent us as promoting objects which would subvert her throne. It is only their own selfish fears which drive them thus to hide and shelter themselves behind the skirts of the royal garments. She is established in her high place (where may God long preserve her) to protect the rights of all; and by a wise and benign authority, to secure the temporal ends of good government; yet, most unjustly to the rest of the community, the Constitution associates her throne with the defence of a particular sect of religionists, who are only a subordinate fraction of the millions over whom she reigns; and an ecclesiastical corporation whose zeal has been always most conspicuous in the promotion of its own interests, imposes on her an oath 'to preserve unto the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland, and to the united Church committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them.' To repay this protection, the sovereign is honoured as the head of the Church, and the Defender of the Faith, and has by her ministers the appointment of the principal spiritual dignitaries, who are willing to surrender what have been well styled 'the Crown rights of the Redeemer,' in return for the power and

place she bestows upon them. Thus our entire legislation receives an unfair bias, and all the civil officers of the crown are restricted in the exercise of their functions. 'With this regard their courses turn away,' and the proper ends of government are thwarted in obedience to ecclesiastical prejudices, in submission to clerical fears."

Perhaps it would have been as well not to allude to the loyalty of Dissenters, whilst attacking the fundamental conditions upon which the crown is heritable. When Anti-State-Church Dissenters talk of loyalty, we are reminded very much of the old proverb, "*qui se excusant, accusant.*"

But, as might be expected, Mr. Miall's meditations on this subject approach nearest to the perfectly pathetic. Thus poured he forth his plaintive lament:—"This, however, does not comprehend the whole, even under this branch of our subject. The liberty we are disposed to claim for ourselves, we are anxious to impart to others. Why should we who insist upon our right of private judgment deny that right to the monarch of these realms? I regard the restrictions put upon the conscience of Majesty in this respect as downright persecution—and I am amazed that any professed Dissenters should advocate the continuance of this flagrant wrong. When we are asked what other guarantee we have for the

Protestantism of the country, we reply by the question, What is that Protestantism worth which is secured only by the force of a royal oath? We admit, however, that the arrangement is a necessary part of the present system. The head of a National Church must not be at war in matters of faith with its members. The fountain of ecclesiastical power must be clear, at any rate, or what can be expected of the streams? As an isolated measure, I fear we cannot grant her Majesty the liberty of becoming a Dissenter, whatever may be the turn of her convictions: for her identity of faith, or of profession, at least, with those over whom she exercises sovereign authority in things ecclesiastical and spiritual, is a *sine quâ non* of her anomalous office. But we would fain set her free from all embarrassment by relieving her of all responsibility—and, by getting rid of a State Church, would break the chains in which her official relation to it binds her conscience. Whilst things are as they are, we can only pity and protest—pity the monarch, that, with the exception of her own High Chancellor, she has less religious liberty than any of her subjects—protest against the wrong done to the people and to truth, that the supreme magistrate, whose influence must always be considerable, is sworn upon taking office to maintain and uphold an ecclesiastical system which, by

a large majority, they may conclude to be not only useless but injurious."

So extensive, so all-pervading, so universal is the precious sympathy of the Anti-State-Church Society! From the cottage to the crown it reaches; from a twopenny church-rate to the Coronation Oath; to the Acts of Union between the three kingdoms of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and to the Act of Settlement. But, as Mr. Miall is so extremely sensitive in behalf of the sovereign of these realms, why does he not contrive some specific for the melancholy case he has so pitifully worked up? Suppose the sovereign did not choose to be a Dissenter at all, as I imagine not many of her subjects will choose to be, if the Liberation Society survives a few years longer; suppose the sovereign married a Papist and went over to Popery himself—what then? Would Mr. Miall "only pity and protest" then? Suppose the sovereign chose to be a Muggletonian, or Mormon, or Mahommedan—what then? How would Mr. Miall carry out his own theory? How would he free her Majesty from all embarrassment, and impart to the monarch of these realms the right of private judgment, claimed by Anti-State-Church anarchists? Meanwhile, what shall be said of such intentions and aims? Are they not unconstitutional? Are they not dia-

metrically opposed to the Constitution? If acted upon, are they not plainly illegal? Does not the law of the land take cognizance of such intentions and such acts? But the case of our civil institutions may be argued upon other and general principles. Dissent by its ablest exponents is always associated with Democratic institutions—with universal suffrage, the ballot, electoral districts, annual parliaments, and the payment of delegates. How, then, are such institutions to consort with an hereditary aristocracy and an hereditary monarchy? Democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, require mutual checks to coexist. But what check can there be upon an absolute democracy, when the democratic element is actually in the high ascendant and supreme? A perfect equality would be superinduced. The majesty of the people would allow of no equal, much less of any superior. Aristocracy and monarchy, therefore, would be extinguished by the same fiat which established those democratic institutions. Now, it is the boast of Dissent, that its very nature and essence are democratic. Once upon a time the Eclectic Review devoted an article to prove the contrary, but *tempora mutantur*. The Liberator now rejoices in appropriating what the Eclectic formerly repudiated as a reproach. With such a system then, as this, in active play, with free

scope given to what is radically and fundamentally democratic, what room can there be either for the aristocratic principle or the monarchical principle to operate? Reverting, indeed, to what has been done, many achievements in the scene of action to which I now allude, have to be put down to the credit of political Dissent. Since 1844 uniformly, and since 1832 all but uniformly, Dissent has done its part in aiding and abetting all democratic inroads upon our civil institutions. During the years 1833 and 1837, two brief intervals, I grant that Dissent affected allegiance to the Whigs, but even that semblance soon disappeared. Soon it did after its own lusts, and resumed its intimacy with Democracy. Much, and indeed most, of that evanescent success attending the Ballot and Reform agitations, and whatever passes under that name, is to be attributed to the Anti-State-Church party. As I have already shown, it was to the Nonconformist that the Complete Suffrage Union traced its origin. The same paper and its party stood sponsors for Chartism, as they formed the main strength and flower of the National Reform Association. All what were called Reform motions, from Mr. Hume's in 1839, down to Lord John Russell's in 1860, have been warmly seconded by the Anti-State-Church party. The only complaint, indeed, though a universal one,

has been, that no one Reform Bill came up to the requirements of that party, and least of all, Lord Derby's. At this time, Mr. Baines, an hereditary Anti-State-Church agitator, is the spokesman of those, who, with an eye to organic reforms or revolution, would reduce the franchise to £6 occupiers. In Mr. Baines's case the ulterior object is doubtless that with which his name and his father's have been always associated—the separation of Church and State. For since 1829, when the Ecclesiastical Knowledge Society was established, and more especially since 1844, when the British Anti-State-Church Association was founded, Dissent has steadily prosecuted another of its aims. It has been instilling into the minds of the masses and the inferior grades of the middle classes, the ideas and opinions inculcated originally in the Nonconformist Sketch Book. But all this was done simply as preliminary to something else—to the extension and reduction of the franchise, by means of which the lessons taught were to be applied in practical legislation. Liberalism, again, has been brought to the feet of the Liberation Society. Both in civil and in ecclesiastical questions the Liberal politician draws his inspiration from the Anti-State-Church party. At the instigation of that party chiefly, the Whigs discarded finality in 1852 in civil mat-

ters, and under the same pressure, finality was put away in 1859 in ecclesiastical affairs. But the same policy has been adopted in both cases. Organic reforms having fallen through, instalments are demanded, though not because organic reforms have been abandoned, but, on the contrary, as the only means to secure them. Bit-by-bit Reform has long been the watchword in the movement to repeal the Reform Act of 1832, and of late the same plan has been tried in ecclesiastical innovations. Liberal candidates will be required to pledge themselves to a standard, varying with the strength of Anti-State-Church influences; but from and after the next general election, every Liberal member will be called upon to promise some concessions. Failing such a pledge, the Liberation Society counsels no intercourse with the Liberals. At the same time, it frankly admits that, judging from the past, very little doubt need be entertained of Liberal candidates coming up to the requirements of the Liberation Society. Thus, then, from the next general election, Liberalism will be bound hand and foot to the Liberation Society. It will formally recognise and adopt Anti-State-Church principles. It will be pledged to carry out Anti-State-Church objects. It will follow up the Anti-State-Church policy—instalments at a time, but the whole in the end,

—one stick of the faggot at once, but the entire bundle before it be given up. For to] Dissent and Democracy and their insatiable greed for dominion may be applied the words of the Roman poet:—

"Et quum possideant plurima, plura volunt.
Quærere ut absumant, absumpta requirere, certant;
Atque ipsæ vitiis sunt elementa vices.
Sic quibus intumuit suffusâ venter ab undâ
Quo plus sunt potæ plus sitiuntur aquæ."

When, however, Democracy has prevailed in the Church and State, then surely the millennium will draw nigh, and the reign of peace be established for ever. Let not Churchmen be over sanguine or hopeful in that matter. Something else than the spirit of peace breathes in the following extracts, endorsed by the Liberator:—

"Church of Englandism is but half-reformed Popery. It retains and insists on an earthly head, teaches baptismal regeneration, makes church-membership dependent on attendance, not character, and in the Burial Service tends to foster an awful delusion. It requires of its ministers assent and consent to everything in the Prayer-book, which contains some notoriously unscriptural dogmas. We must dissent because of these and other things. We cannot take the Prayer-book, but the Bible, for our creed—the former brings the soul into an ignoble bondage. Christ's true followers are to be

free—free from human impositions of doctrine, but thoroughly and gladly submissive to the authority of Christ. The Established Church is exclusive. It must be so. It cannot fraternise with those who dissent from it, although these may be regarded as good men. We open our pulpits to all who preach Christ—they cannot, dare not; they are bound—we are free."

Is not that an echo of the old war-cry against Popery and Prelacy? To the same effect is much of what has either been published or approved by the Liberation Society. Need we be surprised, then, as we read in the Churchman of August, 1836, when candour was a virtue more in vogue with Dissent, than of later years, that even the separation of Church and State is not "the be-all and the end-all" of Dissent? Let the following extract speak for itself:—

"Many Churchmen will not believe that the Dissenters aim at anything more than the separation of the Church from the State, but let all men hear what the Dissenters themselves say on the subject, in the very last number of the Ecclesiastical Journal, a periodical published under the sanction of all the leading dissenting teachers. The editors say, 'We rejoice to labour to forward that separation from the State, without which we

are fully satisfied that no Church can ever be formed or maintained on scriptural principles. Our view of those principles would lead us *far beyond such separation*; for when that shall have been effected, there will, in our judgment, *be much in the Episcopal form of Church government*, not only unwarranted by, but decidedly contrary to the apostolic practice, to which that form no less erroneously than boldly lays an exclusive pretension. With this, however, we meddle not *now*, deeming it the *present duty* of all ecclesiastical reformers to direct their attention to those abuses which tend to support a union inconsistent in principle, and mischievous in the whole extent of its operations.'"

Do not the words in italics bespeak an object ulterior even to the separation of Church and State? I do not forget the protest of the Liberation Society to the contrary. I allow that it disclaims all wish to alter either the doctrine or worship of the Church of England; but who can accept that wish, even if it be sincere, as any guarantee? Who can stop the progress of innovations at his pleasure, and much more, who can set any limit to the revels of Democracy, when "lust hard by hate" once gets the mastery? The old story, then, will be repeated. The day of perfect equality for all religious sects will never dawn. The instant a balance is struck,

one scale will ascend, the other descend. If the Church of England be ever reduced to a sect, she will be reduced still lower. She will be again cast out and trampled under foot. The cycle of time will have brought back to her the days when her bishops and clergy were evicted; when her services were cut short by the interdicts of Protestant bulls; and her name and place were no where to be found. Whenever the Church of England be separated from the State, then will burst out anew the flames of persecution. That separation will proclaim, not perfect equality, but the savage domination of the sword, and fanaticism, and democracy, all blended together. As the Church's toleration is scoffed at and disparaged now, so those scoffers are the very persons to deny toleration to others, were they again exalted to the high places of the earth. The next turn in affairs I shall not speculate upon. Enough has been said to ascertain the Church's position, and its bearings, past, present, and future. The moral of my sketch I leave for the next and last chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION—THE POSITION AND DUTIES OF CHURCHMEN AND CONSTITUTIONALISTS.

In former chapters I have discussed the relative positions of the Whigs, Radicals, Protestant Democratic Dissenters, and Irish Romanists, during the last thirty years. What were the countervailing influences, and how wielded? When the first Reformed Parliament met in 1833, the surging tide of Democracy threatened to sweep away in one common wreck, all the original landmarks of the British Constitution — an Established Church — an Hereditary Peerage—a Limited Monarchy. Earl Grey himself bade the bishops set their houses in order. Church-rate agitation, engendered by the agitation for Reform and the Political Unions, convulsed the large towns and fanned the kindling sparks of political dissent into a flame. In fact, Church-rate agitation took its rise from Birmingham

and the Birmingham Political Union; but in its origin, and aim, and political associations, the Birmingham Church-rate agitation was but the model of other similar movements in Manchester, Rochdale, and elsewhere. For further information on which head, alike curious and valuable, I beg to refer the reader to a pamphlet* published in 1837, which has been courteously placed at my disposal by its author, the worthy Honorary Secretary of the Committee of Laymen, Mr. Knott.

One result of the agitation, the one with which I have to deal, was eminently satisfactory. Earl Grey's declaration led to a deputation from Birmingham to the then Archbishop, Doctor Howley, whose surprise at such a demonstration from such a quarter, probably equalled or surpassed the pleasure he experienced. And the Churchmen of Birmingham, so far from succumbing to the motley league of Romanists, Dissenters, and Political Demagogues, ranged together under the banner of Church-rate Abolition, succeeded at last, not only in vindicating their superiority, but in suppressing the Political Union. Unhappily the law of Church Rates, miserably defective in what ought to constitute its strength, left to

* Letter to William Stratford Dugdale, Esq., M.P., by a Birmingham Manufacturer, one of his Constituents.

the Churchmen of Birmingham, as it has left to many a successful assertor of parochial privileges since, nothing better than a barren victory. The first bright ray of hope, indeed, for the Church, broke forth from a quarter which appeared one dense opaque mass of clouds and darkness. In 1834, Lord Grey's Ministry was shaken to its fall by the resignation of four of its principal members. The stumbling-block, moreover, in their way was none other than the Irish Church. Let it not be forgotten, that the noble leader of the Conservative party has twice sacrificed place to principle, has twice foregone the most cherished aspirations of an honourable and noble ambition, rather than barter away for power or for court distinction, the convictions of reason and conscience. Once he paid the forfeit in 1834, and once again in 1845; but on the former occasion, it was to protect the Church, and more particularly that branch of it established in Ireland, from the hand of spoliation and sacrilege; from the confiscating bands of Irish Romanists and Protestant Dissenters, and Infidel Democrats, combined and supported by insidious Appropriation Clauses, woven and spun in the cabinet councils of the Whigs. From that event—from the resignation of Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, the Duke of Richmond, and the Earl of

Ripon in 1834—dates the revival of the Church's ascendancy since the Reform Bill. It led, in the first place, to the retirement of Earl Grey and Lord Melbourne, and to the unexpected accession to office of Sir R. Peel. In the second place, it led to a reconstruction of the Tory party on the basis of Conservatism, the great and distinguishing article of Sir R. Peel's creed being the preservation of all the Church's rights and privileges intact. After the general election, therefore, and the new appeal of 1835, the Church and Conservative party were in a position to hold their own against all the four Liberal sections united. The Appropriation Clause, indeed, was carried in the Commons, and restored the Whigs to office; but if that were not the only purpose intended, it certainly was the result most pleasing to the promoters of that scheme. And since 1836, no Liberal Ministry has ventured to revive the question. But in 1835, an association was founded "for the strengthening the United Church of England and Ireland, and promoting its greatest efficiency," and designated "The Established Church Society." This is remarkable as being the first defensive organisation in opposition to the heterogeneous phalanx banded together against the Church. But the means suggested for carrying out the Society's object are not less worthy

of record, and may be usefully applied in our day. They were as follows:—

"The use of the press, by publishing, or promoting the publication of original or selected books and tracts, by the issue of circulars, and by the insertion of papers in the popular vehicles of intelligence, with the view of exhibiting to the country at large the incalculable blessings which have already been derived to the nation from the Established Church, and the great increase of those blessings which, by the Divine favour, may still be expected; of showing the lawfulness and advantages of the union of the Church with the State; of pointing out the duty of a Christian legislature and government to provide those advantages for the people; of repelling unjust charges against the Established Church; of exhibiting the dangers and evils with which many of the changes proposed must inevitably be attended; and of leading the members of our national communion to an intelligent view, and conscientious fulfilment, of their duties in that relation."

Such is the language of the Society itself. Branch societies were also formed in the provinces, and the following resolution passed and published by the committee:—"That it appears to this committee that any legislative measures which contemplate

the taking away a portion of the revenue of the Irish Church, in order to its being applied to other than Protestant and strictly Ecclesiastical purposes, would be destructive not only of the welfare, but of the very existence of the Protestant Church in Ireland; would speedily lead to the degradation and overthrow of the Establishment in England; and would greatly endanger the Protestant religion itself throughout the United Kingdom." Sound, however, as was the basis, and judicious as were the means suggested by the Established Church Society, like most other associations of the kind, it was from the first crippled by want of funds. It appeared to supply what was greatly needed—a centre of union, a guarantee for common principles, common objects, and common action; and it effected much, especially by means of auxiliary and kindred associations. But I have not been able to trace any lasting or decisive results to its operations, and I believe it sank under the malady with which it was ushered into existence. I must remark, however, that the absence of internal organisations was to some considerable degree atoned for by that firm cordial alliance, grounded upon reciprocal interests, between the Church and the Conservative party. So long as individual Churchmen looked to the hustings; so long as they scru-

tinised closely the motley group of candidates, and reserved their votes for the friends of the Church and Constitution; so long, too, as the Conservative party, with stern resolve and united front, hurled back the democratic invaders; so long, I say, the Church was safe, though no society existed to take her under its wing. Certainly it was not by internal organisations, for there were none, but by party connections, by a solid compact, based upon a community of principles and objects with the political party under Sir R. Peel, that the Established Church survived the terrible quinquennial immediately following upon the passing of the Reform Act of 1832. For the first great anti-Church crusade came to a close, virtually, with the year 1837. Wholesale schemes of confiscation had been abandoned before, and that year saw the rabble rout defeated on Church Rates. The attempted settlement of 1837, devised by the Whigs simply at the dictation of the Democratic element and to satisfy the clamorous demand of Birmingham agitators, was effectually frustrated by the firmness and union of the Church and Conservative party. The lesson then taught has served the Whigs from 1837 up to the present time. As the Appropriation Clause was dropped immediately it had borne the Whigs back again into the haven of office, so what was repre-

sented as the stupendous grievance of Church Rates, faded away as soon as it had helped the Whigs to tide over their pressing difficulties in 1837. With the year 1839, indeed, closed the great Democratic conflict generated by the Reform movement. The false moves of some parties, the faithlessness of others, and the steady, watchful operations of the Conservatives in guarding every pass, more than counterpoised the fearful odds at first gained by Democracy in 1832. At the same time other public men besides the four seceders from Earl Grey's Cabinet, and notably the late Sir Francis Burdett, disgusted and alarmed at the truckling of the Whigs to Democratie dictation, and especially at their base subserviency to that prince of agitators, Daniel O'Connell; seeing, moreover, that the new force acquired by the Democratic element was directed to the subversion of the Established Church, with which is indissolubly bound up the integrity of the British monarchy itself;—perceiving all this, and that no chance for peace and peaceful enterprise remained, save in the strengthening of the Constitutional element, many public men began to turn their thoughts to Sir R. Peel and his party, as to the only refuge against chronic agitation at home and tumultuous diplomacy abroad. Then, too, was heard the signal of the commander himself

when he bade his followers "register, register, register." Thus was the country prepared for the decisive triumph of 1841, and thus, for another brief space of eight years, the Church and the settlement of 1832 were left comparatively unmolested. The Anti-State-Church revival and organisation of 1844, together with the accession of Lord John Russell in 1847, prepared the way for another Democratic raid. In this second onslaught went down the Whig standard of finality, ere the struggle had well begun.

In 1852 the Church and Conservatism rallied for an instant, but only to be broken and dispersed apparently in a more hopeless rout. Nevertheless, we appeal to this day with pride and gratitude to the memorable protest of Lord Derby, on his first assumption of the post of Premier, against the inroads of Dissent and Democracy upon the Constitution. That protest proves with what foresight and calm decision the Conservative leader surveyed the coming tempest; and how his spirit quailed not before the gathering clouds. Soon the storm burst, and burst at once both upon the Church and the State. I need not rehearse again the story of the last ten years—the arduous struggle on Church Rates, and the more desultory and disastrous attacks on the settlement of 1832. It was not till the year

1856 that Churchmen were roused to a sense of their danger; but what was then done was done well and seasonably. After a life of active and commercial enterprise, in which, however, the duties of the citizen and churchman had never once been suffered to stagnate, the success of Sir W. Clay's Abolition Bill in 1855 recalled from his retirement the ever-watchful Secretary of the Committee of Laymen. A second pamphlet was issued by him containing a sketch of the Anti-Church-Rate agitation. Immediately afterwards communications were opened up with several staunch friends of the Church, and means adopted for constituting a Committee of Laymen, to watch over the Church's public interests. That Committee was formed in 1856, at the instance and by the exertions of Mr. Knott. Composed of Peers, Members of the House of Commons, and private individuals, the basis was wide enough to command respect, and not too wide to distract and weaken the Committee's energies. In its constitution, every shade of churchmanship was and is represented; but a common union in Church defence, as it tends to smooth down the asperities of private idiosyncrasies, so it also brings out into bolder relief the undiscovered points of agreement, and that wide undebateable territory, upon which all sincere churchmen may expatiate

freely. More pretentious organisations there have been made, but I very much question whether, with means so limited, any could point to more decisive results, during the first decade of its existence, than the Committee of Laymen. Besides, they were the pioneers in the work, and the enemy had got the start. Not only were his guns in position, but one outwork had been seriously imperilled. It was, therefore, to lead what seemed a forlorn hope and a desperate enterprise, that Mr. Knott appealed to the Committee of Laymen in 1856. But by disseminating sound information in the country, and by meeting the tactics of the Liberation Society in Parliament, on the hustings, and in the parishes, the Committee of Laymen have worked a work, the fruits whereof will leaven many an otherwise hopeless contest with the guerdon of success. But the honorary Secretary of the Committee of Laymen is no novice in the work of Church defence. His period of voluntary service dates from the year 1819; and the records of the Midland counties, for some thirty years, and the lobbies of the House of Commons, and hundreds of parishes, for the last nine years, testify to his zeal, his endurance, his disinterestedness, his vigilance, his sagacity, and his constant fidelity to the active public duties of the Churchman and Constitutionalist. In 1859 the

short-lived ministry of Lord Derby redeemed the promise of his former Government in 1852. One effort was made to meet the agitation against Church Rates, another was directed to settle the question of Reform. Both failed, but not through any inherent or incurable defects in the plans proposed. As the Whigs have enjoyed a monopoly of office since 1832, so is it their policy to monopolise every agitation and convert it into political capital. Dog-in-the-manger fashion, they will neither settle questions themselves, nor allow others to settle anything. It is the Whig policy to meddle and muddle everything; to keep some question or other always "dangling" before the public gaze; to take up some agitation or other when in opposition, and then drop it when in office; and thus, whilst Constitutionalists in the one case, and Revolutionists in the other, to trade upon the credulity of both, alternately. This is the secret of the failure of Lord Derby's ministry in 1859; for neither in 1852 nor in 1859 were the Conservatives in a majority. They were, therefore, just the objects upon which Lord John Russell's singular magnanimity could operate with a sharp, factious resolution.

As some counterpoise, however, to the wholesale apostasy of the Whigs in 1859, the Church Insti-

tution was founded by Mr. Henry Hoare—another name to be had in honour for ever. This organisation, specially adapted to unite the clergy and laity in the defence of the Church, has extended its ramifications through the whole length and breadth of the land. In thus guiding and concentrating public opinion, the Church Institution has not only gained great success already, but possesses an unlimited field for future action. Upon this subject, however, of organisation, I cannot do better than quote the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, uttered, in his character of Chairman, at a general meeting of the members of the Church Institution, held in April of this year :—

"The Committee of Laymen is, as its name designates, a society exclusively of laymen, and those, I believe, resident in or near London. Their object seems to be to watch such measures in Parliament as may affect the interests of the Church, and when they are injurious to those interests to do their best to defeat them. I may mention a name with which many of you here are acquainted—I mean Mr. Knott—as being, perhaps, the most active member of that body. The Church Institution consists of lay and clerical members, and its main object is to promote the co-operation of the laity and clergy together in advancing the

interests of the Church in every possible way. And here I must mention another honoured name as having been chiefly instrumental in founding this Institution—I refer to the name of Mr. Hoare. It is impossible to speak too highly of that gentleman's earnest zeal in the cause, and what I may call the thoroughly self-denying and self-sacrificing devotion in which by day and by night and hour after hour, he has been persevering in the cause. It is as well to mention that this Institution has no concern with doctrine—that it does not touch upon party, either in politics or religion. It desires to keep clear of these. It desires to impress all who are within the limits of the Church of England, and to invite and to encourage them in protecting in every way the interests of the Church. The organisation which it recommends is through the rural deaneries of England and Ireland, and there is an advantage in that organisation, because the meeting of rural deaneries is based upon territorial limits, and not upon any identity of opinion. The consequence is that the meeting of rural deaneries generally comprises persons of every shade of opinion; and there is a great advantage in that, because I am sure when those who differ in opinion on Church matters meet together, it is generally the case that asperities are softened, that

points of difference of opinion seem to diminish and almost to dwindle away in points of agreement, and a more brotherly love and kindlier feeling of charity pervades the meeting."

But local Church Defence Associations have also sprung up in most of our large towns, many of them offshoots of the Committee of Laymen, and by means of lectures, pamphlets, and united action, have greatly contributed to the dispersion of the democratic armada led on by Sir J. Trelawny, Mr. Hadfield, Mr. Baines, Mr. Dillwyn, Sir M. Peto, and Mr. Locke King, but over which Mr. Bright and Mr. Miall hold supreme direction and command.

But the general election of 1859 was the real fulcrum upon which all the constitutional leverage, since exerted, found a rest. So was it in regard to the general election of 1835, under the auspices of Sir R. Peel. Neither gave the Conservatives an absolute majority. Each, in fact, left them in a minority, so that both Sir R. Peel and Lord Derby were constrained to yield up the reins of office; but that minority, united and resolute in the defence of the Church, tamed the insolence of Democracy and confounded the perfidy of Whigism. How is it that, in 1859, the second reading of the Abolition of Church Rates Bill was carried by a majority of 74; that in 1860, that majority had dwindled down to

29; that in 1861, it was reduced to 15; that in 1862, it was reversed, and converted into a minority of 1; that in 1863, Sir J. Trelawny's bill was rejected on its second reading by a majority of 10; and that in 1864, to save it from worse mishaps, it was never introduced at all? Shirk such facts, or pervert them as they may, Liberal churchmen can neither alter nor suppress them. Neither was it any fortuitous concourse of antagonistic forces that produced such results. They were not the fruit of accident or mere luck, or the effect of both combined. Much less is the improved position of the Church in Parliament due to the forbearance, or moderation, or connivance of those who opposed her. Never did mathematical proposition admit of clearer demonstration than the causes which have contributed to the recent victories of the Established Church in the House of Commons. In 1859 full many a requiem was sung over Church Rates, as though a decent sepulture was all that had to be performed. And lest, when Church Rates were consigned to their final rest, the House of Commons should find the business of undertaker to the Church dull and slack, the Liberation Society at once set about hunting up new victims. A holocaust was prepared: endowed schools, churchyards, universities, were cast into the

furnace, and the fire that was to consume them was heated sevenfold. That was the great day of exultation and triumph to Dissent and Democracy.

But to render the issue more distinct and marked, observe this other circumstance. So desperate did the chance of Church Rates appear in 1859, that the Whig ministry deserted to the Church's enemy. Collectively and bodily Lord Palmerston's government surrendered Church Rates, and voted in behalf of unconditional abolition. That false step has not been retrieved. On the contrary, ever since that one wholesale apostasy in 1859, the Whig party has cast in its lot, on Church questions generally, with Dissent and Democracy. Since 1859, the four sections of Liberalism have all been found arrayed, as one party, against the Church of England. How, then, comes it that the Church has more than held her own? that she has not only beaten off, but subdued the aggressive spirit of her foes? Let the division lists answer. Let the debates in Parliament speak. Ever since the general election of 1859, the House of Commons has been divided practically into two parties, and two only—into Liberals and Conservatives; the former being the Anti-Church party, and the latter the Pro-Church party. Here, then, the mystery of the Church's successes is accounted for, if mystery

there can be, in what every week's divisions during the last four sessions, from 1860 to 1863 inclusive, proclaimed in the ears of the whole people. At last the Church has put forth her strength; but that strength was not to be wasted on the barren air. It was exerted where alone power must be exerted to produce results—upon the hustings and within the walls of Parliament. Years ago that secret was known to and practised by Dissent. In the natural course of events, therefore, in self-defence, the Church looked round and summoned her friends, and they responded to the call, not for the first time. But the Church's friends were not found among the Radicals; for, since 1832, they had steadily and consistently acted with Dissent. Neither did the Church discover her friends in the ranks of Whigism; for in her hour of need the Whigs sold themselves to her implacable foes. It was to the constitutional party—to the party which claims Lord Derby as its chief—that the Church appealed when the Whigs again proved false, and the Democratic element gathered itself together for a fatal spring.

Thus are we brought in view of the present position of the Established Church. She too has been driven, in self-defence, to identify and ally herself with a political party, if not wholly in the constitu-

encies, at least in Parliament. And by that alliance she has been saved, as far as her safety is bound up with Church Rates, and the preservation of those other rights and privileges, around which for the last four sessions the tide of parliamentary warfare has raged. Is, then, the present position of the Church a position secure and impregnable, and which may defy the league of all her enemies? Or is the Church, by which I mean the Church Established, in danger? If so, in what quarter do the clouds of danger lower? To these queries I shall now address myself.

In the first place, I say the position of the Established Church is a position neither impregnable nor secure, but fraught with danger, great and imminent, because unseen, though near. Is it, then, the Liberation Society that I fear? In one sense it is, but not in the ordinary view of that association. Notwithstanding the all but superhuman efforts of that society, its past career has been an unmistakeable failure. Since 1832 we may fairly calculate that some £100,000, has been expended upon the Anti-State-Church agitation. In the first year of its existence, ending April 1845, the income of the British Anti-State-Church Association amounted to £1002. At the end of ten years, in 1855, that income had risen to £3000,

and for this last year, ending April 1864, I find the proceeds, inclusive of a balance of £286, put down at £4745. Taking, then, the average of the last twenty years, we may reckon up the whole sum placed at the disposal of the Anti-State-Church Association at something like £60,000. Considering, then, the numbers and social position of political Dissenters, that sum bespeaks a degree of liberality, which is a solid proof of earnestness and sincerity in the work. And, as at present conducted, the Anti-State-Church agitation argues no contemptible gifts of patience, industry, dexterity, and heroism. The Liberation Society is never beaten. Checked it may be, but not as yet stopped. Its organisation, radiating through every corner of the kingdom, is nevertheless kept well in hand, and brought to bear upon any simple question with all the promptitude and precision of a veteran battalion.

Much also of humour and good temper is mixed up with unflinching constancy and irrepressible ardour, in the pursuit of what is distant and chimerical. Nor must I omit to notice the civil, frank, obliging tone of its officials, equally removed from obsequiousness and from obtrusion. Above all things the Liberation Society has well learned the lesson of propagandism. Sunday-schools and day-schools, the press and the pulpit, lectures and

libraries, the platform, the parish vestries and Parliament are taxed for occasions to disseminate Anti-State-Church dogmas. But yet the Liberation Society is nothing, has done nothing, can do nothing, where alone the issue *now* rests—among the upper and middle classes. The truth is, the Liberation Society has to suffer for the sins of the British Anti-State-Church Association. However moderate the tone and conciliatory the policy of the former, our waking visions are still disturbed by the Nonconformist Sketch Book, the Complete Suffrage Union and Chartism, and the embodiment of all three in the British Anti-State-Church Association.

Mr. Binney's fell charge still sounds in our ears. "The English Church is a great national evil; it is an obstacle to the progress of truth and godliness in the land; it destroys more souls than it saves; and, therefore, its end is most devoutly to be wished for by every lover of God and man." Let not indeed the moderation of the Liberation Society be mistaken. It is a change of tone only, not of principles or objects, or policy. If the *suaviter in modo* is now cultivated, the *fortiter in re* is not forsaken. Besides, it was the mission of the British Anti-State-Church Association to propagate principles not before professed. In this respect the Liberation Society has

entered into the labours of the British Anti-State-Church Association. But whilst the sentiments of the former are clothed in softer and less offensive dictum, the sentiments themselves are unchanged and unchangeable.

The change made in the title has been extended to all Anti-State-Church productions. A style less harsh, a tone more subdued, a spirit more genial, epithets more euphonious and more fallacious, have been adopted universally. The contest is represented as between Coercion and Willinghood, between the compulsory and the voluntary systems, between might and right, between iniquitous prescription and equity, between illiberal and liberal ideas, between established wrong and individual rights, between intolerance and tolerance, between politics and religion, between ecclesiastical monopolies, the protective system in spiritual matters, and free trade, between ecclesiastical taxation and immunity therefrom. This is the way the whole question is begged by means of covert assumptions. Such a mode of warfare, now reduced to an exact system, in which current words, transposed from daily use and ordinary meanings, are made to speak the mystic language of the Liberation Society, argues neither fairness, candour, nor confidence in the issue. But mystification is, I fear, a favourite

art with the Liberation Society. At all events, an obvious confusion runs through many of its arguments and statements.

"State churches are not churches of Christ, but in their every essence anti-Christian," we are told. Even that assertion rests chiefly, so far as I can see, upon one solitary text, "My kingdom is not of this world," and that text has nothing whatever to do with the question. To apply it to their purpose the Anti-State-Church party violate every common law of interpretation. They pick out a passage from the context; they twist it to suit their own foregone conclusions; and then upon that single text, severed and disconnected from the subject matter, they build up an abstraction. But not content with one outrageous perversion of Scripture, they proceed to another. Having set up their abstract theory of Anti-State-Churchism, they straightway use it to prove their particular point—the necessity of separating Church and State in this country. But surely Sir J. Trelawny was right in the distinction drawn by him in his speech of 1863. An abstract theory is one thing, but it is another and a very different question to reduce that theory to practice: to conclude that the abstract fits in with the concrete in every case; to confound the theoretical with the practical. If I could concede the abstract, or even

so much as Sir J. Trelawny admitted, I should still dispute the wisdom of separting Church and State in a country which has preserved their union through all the revolutions of its reigning dynasties and religions, from the earliest dawn of its authentic history down to the middle of the nineteenth century.

Whatever else may be said in its favour, this much is clear, that that union existed under Saxon, Dane and Norman; that it continued under the Plantagenets, Tudors, Stuarts, and even during the Commonwealth; and that, whilst everything else was changed, it was preserved entire alike by Romanists, Protestant Episcopalians, and Protestant Dissenters, in the brief day of their supremacy. Equally vain is it for the Liberation Society to parade its loyalty and devotion to the throne, when it seeks to pull down the altar. Does not the Anti-State-Church party ignore the royal supremacy in matters ecclesiastical? Does it not aim at expunging the Coronation Oath, the Act of Limitations, and the Acts of Union? So far from boasting of its loyalty, that party will do well to rebut the charge of inciting to revolution and rebellion against the law. If its principles and objects be not subversive of the law and the Constitution, then the latter is, what Mr. Bright regards it, a myth.

But that the Constitution is not a mere figment of the fancy, appears from hence, that even the Liberation Society pretends that "the means resorted to by the society shall be moral and constitutional only." If, however, either the principles, objects, or policy of the Liberation Society be constitutional, then the Constitution provides for its own self-destruction. It retains in its service a band of robbers and assassins, to plunder and stab itself. It not only indulges an uncontrollable propensity to suicide, but it feeds the hand and whets the knife that are to shed its own life's blood. But that which is anti-constitutional is plainly illegal and contrary to the Queen's peace. I may here observe that among other subscribers to the Liberation Society, besides members of Parliament, I find the names of several magistrates, of several mayors, several aldermen, and several councillors, all paraded in their official garb, and all of whom have made the declaration, "upon the true faith of a Christian," that "they will never exercise any power, authority, or influence which they may possess, by virtue of their office, to injure or weaken the Protestant Church, as it is by law established in England, nor disturb the said Church, or the bishops and clergy of the said Church, in the possession of any rights or privileges to which such

Church or the said Bishops and Clergy are or may be by law entitled." But when a Cabinet Minister and Privy Councillor, when ministerial officials and members of Parliament make the same declaration, and yet exercise the power, authority, and influence of their office to injure and weaken the Established Church and to disturb the Church and her Bishops and Clergy in the possession of their undoubted rights and privileges, what can be expected of simple justices of the peace, or of mayors, aldermen, and town councillors?

Another transparent trick of the Liberation Society is to represent all voluntary efforts in the light of conclusive arguments against State-Churches, even when exerted by State-Churches. If the Bishop of London's appeal for the million fund be not made to appear as another authority in favour of the Liberation Society, the Bishop will fare better than other dignitaries of the Church. But the Liberation Society is also addicted to a worse vice—to that of mutilation. Thus whilst Paley's statement is quoted to the effect that "a religious establishment is no part of Christianity," his other statement that "It is a means of inculcating it," and that "there is nothing in the nature of religion, as such, which exempts it from the authority of the Legislature, when the safety or

welfare of the community requires its interposition," is suppressed. Even the "Hints to Electors," recently published, contain another instance of the same kind. Thus it is said that "in 1834 the Government (Earl Grey's) proposed 'that, after a time to be fixed, the payment of Church Rates in England and Wales shall cease and determine.' That motion," it is added, "was carried; but thirty years have passed and Church Rates are still levied!" Now who would imagine that allusion is here made to Lord Althorp's plan for paying £250,000 annually out of the land tax, in lieu of Church Rates? Is it honourable or honest to practise such suppressions? Every reader, at first sight, would imagine that it was unconditional abolition which Earl Grey's Government proposed. Let those two instances suffice of a disreputable practice I have not unfrequently noted in the proceedings of the Anti-State-Church party. Even the abuses in the Church's temporalities are apt to be read with a wrong bias in the pages of the Liberation Society's publications. That which is not only accidental and extraneous, but opposed to the very principle of an Established Church, is often put in such a light as to compromise that principle.

Finally, I would remark upon the rabid intolerance of the Anti-State-Church party. From en-

thusiasm to imposture, it is said, the step is perilous and slippery. That step, however, seems to have been taken by the Liberation Society. In its search after perfect equality, it forgets the elements of toleration. Anti-State-Church partisans may have consciences and may arrogantly uphold in their particular case the absolute supremacy of conscience, but hostile opinions and consciences of another order are to be stifled and silenced. The motto, indeed, of the Liberation Society is that which charmed so mightily the patriarch's friends of old—"We are the people, and wisdom will die with us." But that motto will be otherwise expressed, and possibly in the chaste style of the modest Yankee, who "calculated" thus:—"Friends, I reckon I know everything, and slightly more; and what I don't know, it ain't worth knowing; that's a fact." So serene is the self-complacency, so consuming the egotism, so absolute the dictation of Democratic Dissent. The doctrine of divine right and passive obedience has again risen from the dead, but in the nineteenth century this is not the teaching of non-juring bishops or devoted cavaliers, but the test exacted by turbulent sects and embryo rebels. And theirs is pre-eminently the right divine to do wrong. Never, except, perhaps, under the Solemn League and Covenant, did there exist surer guarantee for

the return of a new and glorious æra of persecution. The essence of Anti-State-Churchism and of the parliamentary ordinances is the same—intolerance based upon fanaticism. Neither is that spirit dormant.

Hence it is that Churchmen are not to be allowed to pay Church Rates. Hence, too, that wretched thraldom under which many Liberal M.P.'s lead a weary life. If it were not for the direct pressure of the Liberation Society, or if members of Parliament could only drop their votes into the secret ballot-box, I venture to assert that not one-fourth of the House of Commons would ever vote for the abolition of Church Rates. These contradictions, then, palpable and gross between the professions and practices of the Liberation Society, and between that Society and the original Anti-State-Church Association, have paralysed an agitation only formidable when it commands the sympathy of the educated and ruling classes.

In another way also the Liberation Society has very much assisted to defeat its own ends. It challenged inquiry, and repeated investigations have only damaged the cause of its champions. With all its boasted willinghood, the Dissent of the Liberation Society stamp, is more generous in fostering political agitations than in building

chapels and schools. The Wesleyans excepted, who are mostly favourable to the principle of an Established Church, and who more than equal all the other sects put together, who and what are the Anti-State-Church party? It is simply an ignoble band of Independents, Baptists, Socinians, Irish Romanists, Guerilla Methodists, Latitudinarians, and Infidels, not amounting in all to 15 per cent. of the population. Such is the combination that seeks to impose its yoke upon the British Empire. Sir Robert Peel, indeed, calculated that not more than one-tenth of the property liable to Church Rates, was owned by Dissenters. Again, of the children educated in National Schools, the Church of England claims, and justly claims, no less than three-fourths. The statistics on marriages bear out the same inferences, though to this subject the Liberation Society has already invited the attention of its votaries.

On the other hand, we may take it to be a fact, that Dissent does not supply any free accommodation for the poor, for the best of all reasons, because such a provision runs counter both to the creed and the credit of voluntaryism. Many chapels and schools, in fact, so far from being refuges for poverty, are burdened with debts from their first opening, and gradually sink under their accumu-

lated encumbrances. Besides, it is the fashion and fate of Dissent to fly away from poverty; to leave the poor and desolate; to abandon the haunts of want and vice and misery; and seek a habitation elsewhere, in some locality better qualified to meet the meagre necessaries of voluntaryism. In the diocese of London even, in the metropolis of the world, 18 per cent. of the accommodation is provided by the Church and only 11 per cent. by Dissenters of all denominations. Yet, it is in the towns alone, that voluntaryism ventures to compare with the Church.

But the million fund of the Bishop of London also proves that voluntaryism is a mighty arm of strength to the Church as well; that indeed the Established Church has taken the lead of Dissent over its own chosen course of voluntaryism. Yet, I never heard any person affirm that with all the combined resources of an Established Church and voluntary efforts on the widest scale, the masses of the people ran any risk of becoming too moral, too religious, or too happy. Other discoveries, however, have followed upon the one-sided statements, and fabulous charges fitted to order by the Liberation Society for the Established Church. Trustworthy scouts have gone forth to spy out the enemy's country, and take a peep into his very camp. And if

the Church have not reached the promised Canaan flowing with milk and honey, political Dissent of a surety is wandering in the wilderness, famished and parched with drought. Neither manna nor rain falls there. Stark and staring is the nakedness of the land. The husks of political frenzy; scraps of democratic sentiment; the mercenary wheedlings of sycophantic servility, are all that is doled forth from the tribunes of democratic Dissent.

But is it for these beggarly elements that we are to give up the simple, sublime worship of the Church? Are we anxious to see our pulpits converted into rostrums for the enunciation of popular flatteries? Such is the change that has come over the Dissent of the Liberation Society. Its pulpits re-echo the fulminations of Serjeant's Inn. The Gospel there proclaimed is that of the Anti-State-Church Association. The only glad tidings of peace to be heard are threats of vengeance upon the Established Church. And for aught I know, the preaching of the ballot and the *doctrine* of universal suffrage have supplanted the doctrine of salvation, and the preaching of repentance. Is this, then, the freedom we are to have for the liberty and catholicity of the Church? Is this the religion which is to supersede the faith once delivered to the saints?

Besides, it is a noisome system at the best. How comes it that in all the democratic movements of the last thirty years, certain Dissenting Ministers have invariably taken the lead, whether it were the Reform movement, the Complete Suffrage movement, the Chartist movement, or the Anti-State-Church movement? Are they the dupes or the despots of their congregations—the creatures or the creators of democratic agitations? Be it as it may, the results are equally deplorable and disreputable. And the impression such a result leaves upon the national mind cannot be favourable. In fact, the Liberation Society has sown the seed of a general reaction in favour of the Church. Now, if never before, we see the advantage of a national religion, in which neither the laity nor the clergy are dominant, where the former are secured against clerical encroachments, and the latter are protected against popular caprice, by one and the same law. Dissent in any shape, I fear, but assuredly political Dissent, without exception, generates a despotism, actual or potential, on the part of the congregation, or on the part of the minister. Religious impulses, in fact, of any kind, whether the emanations of Romanism, or the Established Church, or of Dissent, are wont to be in themselves intolerant. There never yet existed an order of

priesthood which could tolerate another, or even opposition. And was there ever a congregation fit to be trusted with its minister's licence? Therefore, we are thankful that the Church of England panders neither to the clergy, nor to the laity; that she was moulded and shaped to suit the relative positions of both; and that though seldom clamorous or intimidating, the voice of popular opinion can still speak aloud, and not in vain, when the clergy trespass upon the rights of the laity.

For my part, this is one great argument I should adduce in favour of leaving the fundamental law of Church Rates as it is. If there be one peril connected with an Established Church, it is that the clergy, secured in their benefices, may be tempted not only to despise the popular will and popular feelings, but also to neglect their social and civil duties. Now the Church Rate is an incidental charge upon property depending upon the will of the majority of rate-payers. Here, then, the clergy are annually brought face to face with their parishioners. Here they have to practice the amenities and virtues of worthy neighbours and good citizens; here their merits and demerits are subjected to the plain criticism of a local public assembly, composed of those who know, and are ready, if need be, to publish to the world, their shortcomings. This

discipline I maintain to be salutary for the clergy and far from injurious to the laity. I cannot, therefore, regret the decision arrived at in the Braintree case.

In other matters, also, the course pursued by the Liberation Society augurs a determination to commit suicide instead of murder. Iconoclast as it is, it worships an image; it has sworn its greatest oath by the memory of Saint Cromwell. That, indeed, was the golden age, we are told, when the Ironsides tumbled down castle and cathedral to the tune of The Sword of Gideon and Links of Iron. Worse still, the "Model Constitution" held out to the admiration of Englishmen by the Liberation Society, is that which once existed, in what once were the United States of North America, and which did not last a century, but is now no more, and a thing of the past. On the first serious strain that Constitution snapped asunder; and yet we are always invited to fall down and do homage to the "peaceful democracy" beyond the Atlantic.

Thus it is that political Dissent is all but denuded of all that wealth, refinement, education, and birth can contribute, of power, and of reputation, the source of power. Neither rank nor genius, nor youth nor opulence grace its council chamber. Those ancient and honourable families, which once

frequented the Presbyterian or Independent chapel, refuse to sit under the Liberation Society. Sunday was not made for political dissertations, nor were chapels instituted for lectures on government. To debauch both one and the other to such purposes, is the glory of modern Dissent. Charity and good-will to man are what make the Sabbath a day of rest, —a day of peculiar blessedness—to toilworn mortals, and not the Charter of Six Points and the ill-will of the Anti-State-Church League. It is to promote rest, to replenish anew the streams of charity and good-will, that such reservoirs as Sundays, and churches and chapels, have been prepared. What are the Liberation Society's chapels save recruiting-quarters for discontent, for sedition, for querulous disappointment, for aspiring vulgarity, for ambitious mediocrity, not acceptable elsewhere?

Whilst religion and religious ordinances are thus prostituted, the national instincts are outraged in another quarter. That proud spirit of national independence and supremacy, the real security and basis of personal freedom, is to be cast out as evil, and to be supplanted by the "muling and puking" of "peace-at-any-price." Is it not something more than curious that the secretary of the Peace Society should sit upon the Executive Committee of the Liberation Society? I may also ask, if there be

not some closer connection than appears between Teetotalism and Anti-State-Churchism? Certain it is, that the National Temperance League and the Liberation Society had the same presiding genius as chairman for 1864, and that was none other than Mr. Samuel Morley. But with respect to the Peace Society, if a greater anomaly can be imagined than the one already noticed—the union of Quakers with physical-force Chartists in 1842—surely it must be the "peaceful Democracy" to be heralded by Mr. Bright and Mr. Miall. Perish, however, religion, and perish liberty and national independence, there would still remain, I suppose, that ineffable blessing of Manchester and Yankee politicians—the unspeakable, transcendent boon of free trade and unrestricted commerce. But since the signing of Magna Charta, which makes the protection of foreign merchants one of the articles of our national liberties, religion, liberty, and commerce have grown together and fostered each other, and they will either never die, or all perish together.

In no one view, therefore, of political Dissent, neither as a system charged with the spread of religion, nor in its purely political features, nor yet regarded in the "almighty dollar" light, can it, if calmly and steadily viewed, possess any fatal fascinations. In all of those phases I rather believe it

to be fatally repugnant to the tastes of the higher and middle classes. And if the masses favour such nostrums as those of the Liberation Society, it is because other and sounder views have not been laid before them. Here, indeed, a great omission, a grievous oversight, has to be redeemed. It is the bounden duty of Churchmen and Constitutionalists to meet the Liberation Society on this arena; before all things to combat the strange perversions of terms, to expose the countless fallacies, to scatter the baseless assumptions, to demolish the ideal images of Established Churches and voluntaryism, set up by the Liberation Society for the poor, the unlearned, and the credulous to hate and detest, or to admire and adore. Upon the text, "My kingdom is not of this world," surely some other comment might be given than that of the British Anti-State-Church Association. "The religion of the New Testament, in the words of its divine Author, forbids the association of the civil and religious authority, or, what is the same thing, declares that, in its very constitution, a State-Church is in violation of the will of the Lord Jesus. We need nothing, we can find nothing, more definite than this. It applies to the times in which we live, 'upon whom the ends of the world are come!' We may now with satisfaction close the book, for

our question is definitely answered—State Churches are not Churches of Christ."

What has that text to do with Church Endowments? It was intended as a protest against any fear of Christianity coming into collision with the Roman government. Unless the Established Church of this country is a menace to the throne, that text can have no application whatsoever. It might very well apply, as Pilate understood it, to Democratic Dissenters, who, as the Anti-State-Church party, are essentially anti-monarchical also. But the following batch of absurdities I take to be wholly matchless and unrivalled in the range of biblical exposition:—"On the day of Pentecost, there were no kingly defenders of the faith; no terms of alliance between Church and State; no House of Lords for apostles and their successors; no sumptuous palaces for spiritual peers; no cathedrals; no beautiful parochial systems, with tithes and offerings; no priesthood established by law, 'with fixed and settled income;' no archbishops, bishops, deans, canons, prebendaries, rectors, vicars, incumbents, curates, in full-blown carnal array." Is not that a discovery? Were there, then, on the day of Pentecost, any Independents, any Baptists, any Socinians, any New Connexion Methodists, any Reform Methodists, any Primitive Methodists, any Congrega-

tional Unions, or any Wesleyan Conferences? Could anything be more puerile, if it were not so profane, as such an appeal? Therefore, we are told, that "The Establishment is the scandal of Christianity. The Establishment is only evil continually. But, blessed be the God of Truth, a lie cannot last for ever! This State-Church cannot escape impending ruin." Hence it follows, "that the only true principle of Dissent consists in the distinct disavowal of the scriptural authority of all national establishments of Christianity; of all Church and State alliance; of all State endowment of the Church; and the explicit assertion of the entire independence of the Church, or in other words, the holding of the principle of voluntaryism." Hence, "State Churches are not Churches of Christ," for "Voluntaryism is the only scriptural basis of support for Christian institutions." Hence, again, those ardent pioneers in the path of progress and reform, would carry us back to the state of things immediately subsequent upon the Ascension of our Lord. Would they, I wonder, agree to have all things common? They would trace their origin, however, to much more primeval times. "We go back to the beginning, and affirm that God made the world on the voluntary principle, in the free

spontaneous exercise of His own infinite wisdom and benevolence."

Such is the latest novelty in the shape of argument for the separation of Church and State! Anti-State-Church theorists assert that voluntaryism is the Scriptural basis of support for Christian institutions. If it be so, then the Established Church is based upon that Scriptural basis. But to vindicate and apply their theory, they proceed to another assumption, that the Church is not supported on the voluntary principle, but endowed by the State; and that, therefore, Church property is national property. But a Church may be established and yet not endowed by the State or even by private individuals. A Church may also be endowed by the State or by individuals, yet not established by the State. And a Church may also be endowed partly before and partly after being established, as was the case with the Church of England. But neither before nor after was it by the State that the Church of England was endowed. The powers that be may fix upon some one form of religion and pronounce it to be the national faith, and the denomination to be recognised by the State as such. Such denomination, however, may have received endowments before that recognition. It may be that certain endowments have been set apart by individuals for

religious purposes long antecedent to that recognition. Thus was it in England. Tithes had been paid originally to Pagan priests. On the preaching of Christianity, they were diverted by successive converts to the use of that religion. And they were enjoyed by Christian teachers for some centuries before Christianity was officially recognised as the established religion. When that event, however, took place, under Alfred, it was also formally enacted that tithes, which had hitherto been devoted to the support of the clergy by the piety and benevolence of individuals, should, by and with the consent of the nation, pass for ever not to a different object, but to what was thenceforth to be the Established Church. The State, therefore, had nothing whatever to do with the Church's endowments, in the shape of conferring them. All that the State did was to determine what form of religion should be established, and then to enact that the endowments already existing should be appropriated to that Church so established. As Mr. Toulmin Smith, himself a Nonconformist, has said—"So far is the State from at present supporting the Church, that every parish church in England was founded not by the State, but by individual donations in ages past; while the parson's income is entirely derived partly from similar sources, and partly from

a charge which has been attached, like any rent charge, to the ownership of certain classes of property for centuries. The State supports neither the one nor the other. All that the State does is impartially to ensure the protection of the law, alike to the ancient property of the Church, and to the more recent property (created by similar donations and endowments) of every Dissenting chapel in the land. The latter are thus just as much State-supported as the former.

Thus the Church's endowments are not and never were State-endowments. All that the State has done is from time to time to determine what form of religion is to be established as the national denomination. Having decided that question, it follows as a corollary to appropriate to that denomination whatever endowments have been given over to religion, when but one form existed, or whatever endowments have been specially assigned to the National Church. The Church's endowments, therefore, are the creation of private donation, of individual liberality, of voluntary contributions. Otherwise, what is the meaning of the Mortmain Acts? Were those statutes enacted to check the State? In that case the State was passing laws to restrict the State—an absurdity. Were they not restrictions on the power of bequest to the Church,

in the case of individuals? And why were they passed? Not because the State disallowed voluntary bequests to the Church, but for the very contrary reason, because voluntary bequests had been and were allowed. But it was apprehended, and not without cause, that many bequests were not voluntary, but compulsory, wrung out of frail men and women on the point of death. Therefore the State, which had encouraged voluntary bequests, was bound to step in and forbid bequests extorted by terror, and threats, and priestcraft from death-bed remorse, or physical and mental prostration. Church property, then, is not national property, except in the restricted sense of no longer being private, but public property. It never belonged to the nation; the nation could not, therefore, bequeath it; to seize it, then, and confiscate it to national purposes or to private aggrandisement, would be at the same time to perpetrate sacrilege and spoliation. It would be something more. It would be as Earl Grey described it, in 1858, "undisguised spoliation of the poor by the rich;" for, as Lord St. Leonards said, "the landowners of England would put millions of money into their own pockets at the expense of the poor throughout the country."

In one sense, and only one, has the State a right

to deal with Church property. It may transfer it to whatever is declared on authority to be the Established Church, and to that Church, so long as it is the Established Church, it is the duty of the State to guarantee a peaceable enjoyment of all the rights and privileges appertaining to Church property. Here I may remark that every civilised country of which any records remain, both in ancient and modern times, has deemed the national recognition of religion, by means of some established form, to be an essential and fundamental part of its civil policy. One exception alone is to be made, and that is a country, which we can only describe by an interrogation and circumlocution. Is there such a place as the United States of North America? If there be, that is the country which, in its model constitution, now preserved in the archives of the Liberation Society, specially provided against the recognition of any denomination as the national religion by the State. Of both the country and its model Constitution, however, may we not say—*fuerunt?*

It appears, then, after all, that the Established Church is based solely upon the voluntary principle. Such a thing as State-endowments have no place in her system. In fact, the difference between the Church's endowments and those of Dissent is one

not of kind, but of time, manner, and degree. And in every respect the voluntary principle of the Church has the advantage over the voluntary principle of Dissent,—in time, in manner, and in degree. As regards time, the Church can plead a prescription of fourteen centuries in her favour; as regards manner, the voluntary principle of the Church is as much superior to the voluntary principle of Dissent as certainty is above uncertainty; as legal prescription is above popular caprice; as that which is fixed, settled, and permanent surpasses an income which is dependent, arbitrary, and precarious; and as regards degree, the Church is equally fortunate.

The advantage, indeed, of voluntaryism, such as that by means of which the Established Church enjoys her endowments, is confessed by Dissenters themselves. Their highest ambition is to procure, either by donation or by bequest, similar endowments. Thus do they strive to provide for their colleges, schools, and chapels, and this is the only explanation and justification for all that course of litigation connected with Lady Hewley's charity. Thus is it that the apostolic precept is carried out in all its fulness—"They who preach the gospel should live of the Gospel." The voluntary system of Dissent is a virtual negation of that com-

mand. Its Ministers do not and cannot live of the gospel. A few popular preachers, the Spurgeons of the system, may make it pay, but, as a rule, dissenting ministers are not only miserably underpaid, but what is worse, that little which they get is often got at the expense of personal degradation. As has been pointedly said, they are the dependent ministers of independent congregations.

To sum up, the voluntary system of dissent keeps the ministers in a state of abject bondage; they dare not preach what they believe, nor profess what they would. Thus is it that dissenting colleges are only half full or even less, for few are so low as to aspire to serve the ministry. Thus is it that the lowest of the people are raised up to minister; that the standard of education and talent is at a minimum; that the higher classes never enter dissenting chapels; that the chapels themselves become encumbered and are at last sold or removed; that no free accommodation can be afforded; and that dissenting congregations are ever on the move, migrating from the poorer to the richer districts, ever hovering on the outskirts of moderate respectability and small shops, but forsaking the destitute, the profligate, the outcasts. Yet this is the system of dissenting Voluntaryism, when brought into contact and emulation with the higher standard of volun-

taryism, exemplified in the Established Church. What then would be the effects of abolishing the parochial system, and the regular clergy of the Established Church! Let the answer be gathered from the Edinburgh Review, no very partial witness to the Established Church. "It is no ordinary national benefit," wrote that periodical, "to have a number of well-educated men dispersed over every part of the kingdom, whose especial business it is to keep up and enforce the knowledge of those most exalted truths, which relate to the duties of man and to his ultimate destiny, and who, besides, have a sort of general commission to promote the good of those among whom they are settled, in every possible manner; to relieve sickness and poverty, to comfort affliction, to counsel ignorance, to compose quarrels, to soften all violent and uncharitable feelings, and to reprove and to discountenance vice. In retired parishes the family of the clergyman is often a little centre of civilisation, from which gleams of refinement of manners, of neatness, of taste, as well as of science and general literature, are dispersed through districts into which they would otherwise never penetrate; and be it observed, that these are the very parts of the country which nothing but an endowed parochial clergy could regularly and permanently influence." But the

poorest districts in our large towns, which are also the most populous, would fare even worse than the country parishes, under the voluntary system of dissent, for dissent can only exist, where it is self-supporting.

Consider again the endless divisions arising out of the dissenting system. Did any chapel ever exist without offshoots, often alien, sometimes bitterly hostile, always different to the parent congregation? The inevitable tendency of dissent is to breed dissent indefinitely and world without end. Imagine a scene of the following sort, which occurred at Salisbury:—

"At a special meeting of the church, publicly summoned, according to the usual custom, over which the Rev. —— ——, at the request, and as the substitute, of the pastor, presided, it was, after a few prefatory observations from the chairman,

"Moved by Mr. ——, and seconded by Mr. ——, deacons,

"'That this church, deeply afflicted with the present state of its affairs, in consequence of the proceedings of some of its members, and convinced that peace is not likely to be restored by the usual means adopted to effect such an object, deems it advisable that this Christian Society should be entirely dissolved; and that, agreeably with this conviction,

this church does now dissolve itself, and no longer exists in its associated capacity.'

"On this motion being read from the chair, a violent opposition was raised against it, and, at length, an amendment was

"Moved by Mr. ——, and seconded by Mr. ——, jun.,

"'That the proposition now submitted to the Church be taken no notice of.'

"When the clamour of the supporters of the amendment had subsided, a division took place; the numbers in favour of the amendment being forty-nine, and against it forty-five; the original motion was therefore lost by a majority of four. The meeting then separated.

"We should charge ourselves with no small degree of injustice, if we were to conclude this statement without expressing our admiration of the Christian patience which has governed the spirit of our brother, Mr. ——: and likewise of the truly amiable temper of mind which has shown itself in that section of the church who have sufficient wisdom and goodness to appreciate the services of their pious and talented minister.

"Under circumstances of most unhallowed provocation, they truly have, in our opinion, exemplified a spirit highly becoming that re-

ligion of meekness and forbearance which they profess."

Then follow the signatures of three Ministers, whose advice had been solicited, and who issued the above statement. Conceive a Church dissolving itself! Conceive that motion put to the vote with universal suffrage! Conceive the resolution for dissolution carried by forty-nine against forty-five votes! Conceive the uproar of applause created by the forty-nine, on having dissolved a Christian Society! But how often has the same thing occurred, owing to precisely the same radical vice inherent in dissent—the choice of ministers? How much canvassing, intimidation, and corruption are thence engendered, besides the endless divisions occasioned!

Surely, there is ample scope here for useful declamation, for startling disclosures, for triumphant defence of the Established Church. Yet, this vast and varied field of instruction lies fallow and waste. Whilst the Liberation Society maintains a monthly organ to record the motes in the eye of the Church, the Church takes no note of the beams in the eye of Dissent. Hence it is that the lower orders of the middle class, the bone and sinew of Dissent, know nothing of the Church, save her defects. If it be true that the masses are

on the Anti-State-Church side, this follows from the same cause. Every abuse and failing and anomaly in the Church's system, the natural growth of time, is taken up, dissected, magnified, and exaggerated by dissenting publications, and those publications are distributed gratuitously and wholesale, through the length and breadth of the land. But this is not the quarter whence danger lowers as yet. So long as those classes do not govern the State, the Church is free from immediate harm.

This introduces us to what are the real dangers impending, and their causes. Of secondary dangers, then, one of the most common, but one, nevertheless, full of risk, I am somewhat at a loss to account for. I am not decided whether it springs from a backwardness on the part of Churchmen in observing the various changes of the political atmosphere, or from the want hitherto of some central, commanding organisation, to direct and concentrate the Church's energies, rather than from any reluctance on the part of individuals to labour and be spent in the Church's defence. Whatever the cause, certain it is that the Church has been slow to move, and that this dilatoriness has more than once seriously endangered her highest interests. Defensive warfare, it is true, presupposes a risk of surprise, but that victory after victory should be stolen by the

same strategy of successive surprises is somewhat inexplicable. More than once, however, have the Church's outposts been stormed and an apparent breach made in the citadel, whilst her forces were burnishing their arms, and making ready for resistance. What is the consequence? Every such success converts allies into lukewarm friends; lukewarm friends into waverers; waverers into renegades; and renegades into open enemies.

This dilatoriness and inertness, in fact, tend directly to mislead. If the Church have the power, why does she not move? Why allow victory after victory to be snatched before her forces are called out? So argue the public. And they also conclude that if she has the power but lacks the presiding will, then she merits her fate. Thus the Church's slowness and backwardness, by conveying an erroneous idea of her resources, induce a belief of imminent danger, that otherwise could never be entertained. Then, with indecent haste, her own mutinous and frenzied crew prepare to scuttle what they conceive to be a sinking craft.

As a practical illustration of this, take the Times newspaper. The successes of Sir J. Trelawny in 1859 fairly turned that journal's giddy head. Than the ebullitions of the Times, indeed, on Church-rates, during the last five or six years, no

more inviting repast could be served up, if they were not also noxious. Thus in 1859, when Mr. Walpole's Bill had failed, and when the Times's patrons, the Whigs, were in opposition, and again in want of democratic sympathy, that journal wrote as follows:—

"The failure of this last effort at a compromise may be considered to close up that avenue, and nothing now remains but to recognise the voluntary principle as far as the fabric is concerned. . . . We beg the churchwardens to desist from collecting all those paltry little sums, varying from a shilling to half-a-crown, that have caused so much heart-burning. We cheerfully accept our position. Our Church is voluntary, and we beg to congratulate it on its newly-acquired freedom."

On the 16th of March, however, when Sir J. Trelawny's Abolition Bill had reached the highest pinnacle of success, the Times favoured its readers with the following diatribe:—

"In former ages there were no such things as frontier lines between one kingdom and another, but an interval of 'no-man's land' left in a state of nature. The Church-rate is just such a jungle or thicket. Since Church-rates answer no other purpose than to fill parishes, parliament, and the courts of law with a most disgraceful and unprofitable

discussion, it is quite time to give them up. Such an impost in these days is only a condemned criminal; its days must be numbered."

In 1860, notwithstanding ominous changes in the majority of Sir J. Trelawny, the Times's complacency was equally unruffled. Thus went the tune:

"England is regarded by many as a *vivarium* of social evils, in which things confessedly mischievous are to have fair play, and to be let alone till we see what becomes of them. In natural history this zeal for science is most meritorious. Toads and spiders, grubs of all kinds, vermin of every description, once placed under a glass case, become interesting objects of observation. . . . We are pursuing exactly the same course with the Church-rate controversy. The whole country is divided; some hundred parishes are distracted by a bitter warfare; the Church, which we are taught to believe the kingdom of heaven, is made to depend on the right of a majority to extract shillings from a minority. Where there is no quarrel now it is invited by the law itself, and certain to come; but, don't interfere; take care how you breathe, how you tread; don't shake the stand; let us wait to see what will come of it, whether an explosion, a fire, something alive, or perhaps only a very bad smell, and results more offensive than mischievous."

Later on, when Sir J. Trelawny's majority had dwindled down to nine, the confidence of the Times vented itself in sullen, bitter mockery to this effect:

"In a book which contains more common sense than is generally supposed, it is written that a live dog is better than a dead lion. We possess in this country a political dead lion, a fossil establishment, in the old Church-rate. It is preeminently a thing out of which growth, and life, and sap have long departed. But the very obsoleteness, singularity, and insufficiency of the rate, are its chief recommendations in the eyes of the Church sentimentalist. Because it is nothing but a principle, therefore it is invested with more mysterious virtues than could be attributed to an institution in full vigour and efficiency. This is the old rule of all idolatries, which ever most worshipped that which was ugliest and most mutilated. We see neither necessity nor sanctity in a rate, which vestries may levy as they please, which is only demanded for two churches out of three, and even for them is wholly unnecessary."

In 1861 desperation came over the wary counsels of the Times. Its hallucinations began to fade away, and with the dawn of consciousness, there broke upon the leading journal the hateful conviction of a blunder worse than a crime. Thus ran the incoherent utterances of the Times on its great

awakening in 1861, when Sir J. Trelawny's majority was reduced to 15:—

"Sir W. Heathcote asserts that people in general are quite content that others should pay the rate, so long as they are let off themselves, and that public feeling consequently has no real place in the matter. There never was a more inadequate account of a question, or less insight into the feelings that gave it life. This is a question of ascendency. Nothing but a question of ascendency would give so much value to shillings, and so much importance to a sum total of a quarter of a million or so. Peter's pence was a question of Papal supremacy, ship money of the prerogative, and the American tea duty of colonial independence. The Dissenters of this country enjoy much toleration, liberty, social power, and prosperity. What they want is dignity and position. They may preach to everybody, convert everybody, form congregations to any amount, go into any parish, build their chapel right opposite the parsonage or the church, seduce every churchgoer, and have crowded meetings when the church is empty as the desert and cold as the tomb. The Dissenters, however, are not content to be tributaries. They want not only social influence and social power, which they certainly have, but social position, and the removal of every mark of infe-

riority. When their principal spokesman gives this account of their feelings, we do not see that it can be disputed; nor is there any reason why it should."

In 1862, the prodigal resolved with himself to leave the husks and swine and to return home, but he addressed himself to the task unwillingly. Nothing, indeed, could be more lame and impotent than the conclusions of the Times in 1862 upon church-rates. Halting between two feelings, between the desire of some decent cover for retreat, and the huge scandal of having made a grievous mistake, the Times' effusions on church-rates were at once feeble and violent, rash and weak and stupid. But in 1863 the wandering fugitive had come to a better mind. Contrite and penitent he no longer procrastinated, but boldly and deliberately knocked for re-admission into the Church's pale. Thus wrote the Times of 1863: "Sir John Trelawny is one of those chiefs who care more for their cause than for their armies. The one they hold sacred, the other food for powder. For the highly prospective and problematical hope of abolishing church-rates, he drags us all through the dirt every year, and inflicts untold personal annoyance. Is there no possible compromise? There really is no insuperable difficulty in the matter. All that is wanted is some quiet, unprovocative way of doing

the thing; some process giving the victory to neither side, and not admitting of a grand celebration or any nonsense of that sort. It is true that some of Sir John Trelawny's friends will think this a very poor result of a thirty years' war. That, perhaps, is because they have some ulterior thoughts, and wish the measure to be, not the end of controversy, but the beginning of the end of something else." Such fantastic tricks before high heaven has the Times exhibited during the last five years on that tight-rope. Such are the balancings of the leading journal on church-rates to the tune of majorities in the House of Commons. But let us not be too hasty to condemn. The House of Commons is supposed to represent public opinion. That the notion is often wide of the mark; that too much importance is often attached to single divisions in that House, and to the verdicts of single Parliaments, is sufficiently clear from the history of the Appropriation Clause, of reform, and of the abolition of church-rates—three of the most important questions that have engaged the attention of Parliament, which have been in agitation for thirty years; which have repeatedly commanded the approving majorities of the House of Commons; but which in 1864 appear to enlist the sympathies of enlightened public opinion in a less degree than in 1834, in the

second session of the first Reformed Parliament. How is this? Do not such facts contain an obvious warning against identifying the House of Commons in all its various moods and changing votes, with the calm, steady, even flow of national convictions? Is it not thence apparent that many agitations are confined to the arena of the House of Commons; that they live and move and have their being there; that they are manufactured there; that they flourish there; and that, if left to themselves, they ultimately die out and expire there? But if the House of Commons, as at present constituted, is quite as often the creator as the creature of public opinion, why infuse into it a larger admixture of democratic impulse? Taking it, however, for granted that the House of Commons is simply the creature of public opinion, no sooner does that assembly come to a decision on some important division, than the whole herd of time-servers and trimmers in hot haste turn about and make their peace with the majority. To the Church this is a result peculiarly disastrous on other grounds. Her friends have not yet learned the value of that mighty engine for guiding popular opinion—the public and periodical press. Yet every circumstance of the times goes to show that public opinion is, and is likely to be, more and more infected with the tone of the press. This

is a practical age—an age of work rather than of thought. The exigences of an increasing population put to their sternest trial the stern laws of political economy. Everywhere is seen the pushing jostling spirit of competition. It is likewise an age of excess and extravagance, of luxury and of libertinism. No time, therefore, is allowed for contemplation. Life is one diurnal round of action and of pleasure, of action to minister to excess, and of excess to relieve action. Hence it is that so much importance is attached to plain, evident facts. Such things as division lists, absolute majorities, numerical calculations, are easy of comprehension. The means by which they are brought about are often remote, sometimes profound, and always obscure. Neither time nor inclination, therefore, allows of their being investigated. The results are palpable, and require no depth of reflection to be understood. Hence to results we look, and by results, however partial and equivocal, most persons abide, with an acquiescence sublimely cheerful, and a resignation supposed to argue the true Socratic spirit. This tendency it is which accounts for the rage of the time for statistical information. Everything now-a-days is brought down to arithmetic. It is the universal standard and basis, not only of political economy but of politics, and of religions as well.

They who know with what facility figures can be manipulated and arrayed, will reserve their best confidence for something more trustworthy than tabular statements. Nevertheless, it is the duty of the Church in self-defence to be prepared on this head also, and to take care that neither in the press nor in Parliament her interests suffer by neglecting the diffusion of sound, useful information. Neither let statistics be contemned. The issue between Established Churches and the Anti-State-Church party, is gradually being narrowed to a comparison of results. And the Liberation Society have not omitted to appeal to Paley's dictum, that, "If the Dissenters from the Establishment become a majority of the people, the Establishment itself ought to be altered or modified." Above all, let the Church see to it, that her own supineness and want of effective organisation do not prematurely transfer the semblance and the actual credit of victory to her enemies, and thus furnish to backsliders and secret traitors the only excuse they stand in need of, to gloze over and consummate their premeditated knaveries.

Perhaps my readers, as they perused this discussion touching the relations between popular opinion and the House of Commons, have mentally exclaimed with Cobbett, "Thank God, we have a

House of Lords." That such an institution exists is certainly matter for hearty congratulation. Were it not for an hereditary peerage, neither the Established Church nor the Monarchy would survive this nineteenth century. Therefore it is, that in all the reforming projects of Democrats, from the time of the Reform Bill, the custom of primogeniture was marked for destruction, and the Upper House of Parliament was intended to consist of elective, not of hereditary legislators. Not only the hostility of the Democrats, but the abuse of the institution by Liberal politicians, bespeaks the importance of the Peers. Many a pliant Whig has given his vote for proposals he cordially detested, because he knew they would never pass the ordeal of the Peers. This holds good particularly of every constitutional question raised by Dissent and Democracy,—of Reform, the Ballot, the Abolition of Church Rates, and many others. How far, however, the opposition of the Lords to the decisions of the Commons may be safely carried, is a question worthy the consideration of all Churchmen and Constitutionalists. But to cast down vain imaginations; to blast all weak and unwarrantable hopes; to teach electors the duty of self-reliance and trust in their own right arm, I beg to commend to their notice a short passage from a speech of Lord Derby

in 1846. Thus, briefly, did the Conservative chief sum up the position and duties of the House of Peers. "My Lords, if I know anything of the constitutional value of this House, it is to interpose a salutary obstacle to rash and inconsiderate legislation; it is to protect the people from the consequences of their own imprudence. It never has been the course of this House to resist a continued and deliberately expressed public opinion. Your Lordships have always bowed, and always will bow to the expression of such an opinion, but it is yours to check hasty legislation, leading to irreparable evils." To put faith, therefore, in the positive obstructiveness of the Lords, to expect them, year by year, to take up a position antagonistic to the Commons, and thus to make of popular representation a mockery and a delusion, would be the last extreme of presumption and ignorance blended. The Peers will do their duty faithfully and fearlessly, but their duty never consisted solely in checkmating popular opinion. If, then, Churchmen and Constitutionalists would give effect to their opinions; if they would place the safety of Church and State upon its only sure foundation; let them, indeed, look for aid and succour from the House of Lords; but let them, at the same time, trust to themselves and their own civil duties,—to the return

of members to the House of Commons, who will strengthen the hands of the Lords, and neither by open force, nor by secret fraud, compromise the principle either of an Established Church or of an hereditary aristocracy and hereditary monarchy. For, after all, willing or unwilling, to this struggle of Dissent and Democracy against the Established Church, the aristocracy, and the monarchy, they are committed. It has begun; it is waxing warm; it will grow in intensity and in extent. Neither will anything precipitate that struggle so much as the false security which ignores all the portents prophetic of such events. This, in fact, is the root of all danger. The superficiality of the age, the insincerity, the absence of all earnestness and enthusiasm are rather consequences than causes. England has enjoyed so long and so profound a repose from intestine commotions, that the idea of revolution seems absolutely ludicrous. Civil and religious liberty have been established on so firm and broad a foundation, that under our ancient monarchy more than republican freedom has been guaranteed. For centuries the government and the privileges of the people have been co-existent and co-equal. Meanwhile, peace and plenty have followed in the train of free institutions. But is there no risk of the nation forgetting the rock whence it was hewn,

the hole of the pit whence it was dug? If we prized our national privileges at their worth and cost, should we bear so easily with the trifling of Lord Palmerston, the time-serving of Earl Russell, the jesuitry and hypocrisy, conscientious though it be, of Mr. Gladstone; or the rank imposture of modern Whiggery, as a system? Yet that false security, the source of all that is false in public opinion—upon what is it founded? Is it not the old heresy—all things shall continue as they were from the beginning? But never was advice more deceptive than the last sentiment of Earl Russell, "Rest and be thankful." Who are they who ought to rest? If it be the higher and middle classes who respect the British Constitution, then to rest is to risk what they esteem. If it be the powers of Democracy, their policy and principle is that of action, of innovation, of offensive measures, because it is not the British Constitution, but that of the United States, which they regard as the model Constitution. In either case, Earl Russell's advice reads very much like the language of insult. For in deluding the people with vain hopes, in exciting unreasonable expectations by means of Reform and other fallacious phrases, Earl Russell has done his utmost to disturb the quiet of this kingdom. He has set on fire the democratic ele-

ment, kindled the torch of popular agitation; and, at the same time, he has defrauded the Constitutional element of its legitimate rest, by reducing it to the extremity of arming in self-defence. As Mr. Bright said at Birmingham, "we live in an age of agitation." It is no fancy of a "heart-oppressed brain," but a serious, sober, literal truth, that a revolutionary propaganda exists in this country; that its ramifications reach to every corner of the United Kingdom; that it holds communications with all the revolutionary elements of the European continent; and that the end sought is the establishment of a Democracy upon the ruins of the British Constitution. The means and the parties to that object have been already defined, and those who read, mark, learn, and digest what I have recorded, will know of the men and their communications. The perusal of these pages will also, I trust, convince every reader that passive resistance can never ward off revolution. *In tanto malo audendum atque agendum est.* All history proves how frail and impotent is the mere negative quality against the positive. However stubborn, however united, however persevering the opposition of dull, inert, patient obstruction, sooner or later its lines will be forced by the ceaseless artillery of an entrenched democracy. There may be a pre-

liminary siege, but at last a breach will be effected, the siege will be converted into a storm, and capture and pell-mell havoc and plunder will ensue. History proves that a few resolute, homogeneous spirits combined have wrought deeds as wondrous as the pulling down of the British Constitution.

The two common soldiers (*duo manipulares*) of Tacitus, who undertook to transfer an empire, bore not the same ratio to the Roman legions as do the Revolutionary powers to the Constitutional in England. Yet those two succeeded in transferring that empire. Let it not be imagined that the masses of this age and country are different to those of other countries and other ages. A Democracy—the rule and reign of the many—is what it always was and must be—something alien and hostile both to aristocracy and to monarchy. Otherwise the terms have no distinct meaning, and the records of Grecian and Roman antiquity are one vast store of confusion and contradiction. No class, indeed, can safely be trusted with a monopoly of power. How much less that class which is at once the most numerous and ignorant, the most credulous and yet the most suspicious, the most improvident and yet the most indigent, the most thoughtless and yet the most meddlesome, the most indulgent and yet the least contented; which, moreover, has nothing to

lose; but luxuriates in every temptation to gain, and which, therefore, has ever been and will ever be predisposed to revolutionary changes—the *ventosa plebs* of Horace? It matters little to object that which Swift long ago urged against a Democracy, that it resembles those animals which spend their lives in spinning clothing for others. We need not go far to learn how even democratic forms, universal suffrage, and the rest, may be made to serve as the foundation of military despotism. Every student of history and every student of human nature, without historical knowledge, must arrive at one conclusion—that at least in old-established and populous countries a Democracy is at once the most unnatural and impracticable of all forms of government. I also maintain stoutly that, under the circumstances, no form of government could secure to the masses of this country the same privileges that are now secured to them by the British Constitution. I hold, indeed, that in this new conflict which is raging between the Constitutional and the Democratic elements, the cause of the Church and Constitution is also the cause of freedom. Here, if anywhere, is to be found the sanctuary of liberty. Here rises her temple and here her altars burn, and the Church of England ministers thereat; for, of all religions, hers is the most tole-

rant, and of all creeds hers is the most comprehensive. It is by the Church established not only that as a nation we are protected from the avalanches of fanaticism and superstition, but that opposing and hostile sects are bound over to keep the peace towards each other, and that the persecuting spirit of sectarianism is quelled and cowed. But, notwithstanding such convictions, though I believe a Democracy would be, of itself, the worst of all despotisms (for of the two, I prefer the despotism of an individual to Democracy, the despotism of the many, on Voltaire's principle, that "I had rather be devoured whole by a great lion, than gnawed in pieces by 400 rats like myself"), and would assuredly result in an imperial despotism; though I believe in the incomparable blessings bestowed upon all classes and every individual in each class, by the benignant genius of the British Constitution; and though I maintain that those benefits descend in the most copious stream upon the masses of the population; am I, therefore, to doubt, in spite of the evidence adduced to the contrary, that there exist individuals and organisations professing sentiments the very opposite, pledged to the overthrow of that Constitution, and devoted to the phantom of "a peaceful Democracy?" Am I to doubt in the existence of an Anti-State-Church Association and

of such societies as the Complete Suffrage Union? Because I stand by the British Constitution, am I not to believe the demagogues of the day when they swear by the separation of Church and State and by Chartism—when they certify (what in the nature of things is a strong probability) that the multitude is on their side—and when they also declare that a £6 borough franchise would be the beginning of the end, the first step in the descent to Democracy, and a guarantee for all the rest? Away then with that false security bred of incredulity and presumption. However excusable the incredulity of ignorance, what can justify the incredulity of knowledge? And if Churchmen and Constitutionalists still refuse to believe in any impending danger, if they still fail to comprehend how a revolutionary vulture is busy gnawing at the very vitals of the British Constitution, then are their eyes judicially blinded; their faculties preternaturally blunted; so that they see not with their eyes nor understand with their minds; and therefore, what will come, must come. True, they will suffer the most in the first collision. The upper and middle classes can hardly gain by a revolution. But they will not be the most grievously disappointed. The dupes of Democracy will pay that penalty in all its bitterness. They aspired to be equal, and they will be levelled in the equality

of servitude. Than that conceit of social equality, indeed, so ardently cherished by Dissent, no more preposterous illusion ever possessed the human fancy. But it is more than probable that the foul spirit can only be exorcised by the hand of time and sharp trials. "*Eventus, stultorum iste magister est,*" wrote an observer of old. So will it be with the dream of social, civil, and religious equality. As Gibbon puts it, "The perfect equality of man is the point in which the extremes of democracy and despotism are confounded," but that equality is the dead level of servitude. Such will be the terrible awakening from the slumber of false security, if that dream of perfect equality be ever realised.

Nearly connected with the above is another strange mistake, in the use and abuse of the word theorists. If the objects of the Democratic party were wholly illusive; if they could be said to be visionary and vain; if, under no possible coincidence of circumstances, they could be realised; then I should speak of them as theorists, as empirics, as idle dreamers. But when those objects are fondly anticipated by large numbers, who know and understand well the machinery of agitation; whose boast it is that the masses are on their side, having been trained and drilled into the Anti-State-Church code; when a line of policy has been marked out, the suc-

cess of which must lead inevitably to the consummation desired; and when the first steps in that policy have been more than once approved and adopted by the Liberal party, and are freely canvassed at every election; then, I say, it behoves us to be careful how we make light of the democratic movement, beguiling ourselves with the notion that the whole affair is merely phantasy, a pleasing vision, a theoretical chimera. Is it a theory or a practical question that is involved in the separation of Church and State? What said Dr. Wardlaw on the subject at the Anti-State-Church Conference in 1844? "We can never be very far from the truth," remarked that forcible writer, "if we assume the identity of *establishment* and *endowment*, and consider an *established church* and an *endowed church* as convertible designations. It would be no very puzzling question in ecclesiastical arithmetic—*From an established church subtract its state endowments, how much of its establishment remains?*" To separate, then, Church and State, is to separate the Church from its endowments. It is to abolish all the rights and privileges of the Church in the Coronation Oath; in the House of Lords; in episcopal and capitular estates; in university enrolments and buildings; in grammar schools; in church-rates; in Easter dues; in tithes;

in glebe; in ecclesiastical edifices, cathedrals, churches, and chapels; and in parsonage-houses; and further, it is to apply all those sources of income to "secular uses." Is this, then, a mere theory? or is it not rather the most practical of objects? And is it not practical as well in its accomplishment as in its results? Would any person, conversant with the history of events in this country since the time of the Reform Bill, presume to assert that to separate Church and State is an impossibility? If not, then let us beware of underrating the issue, by persuading ourselves or others that it is all theory and speculation. Again, there may be some good easy souls ready to flatter themselves that Chartism is also a theory, neither meaning anything, if carried out, nor yet capable of being carried out. But ask those who advocate Chartism what it implies, and whether there be any means of giving it effect. They will tell you, as they have told you before, that to bring about the Charter; to establish in this country a system of government based upon universal suffrage, the ballot, equal electoral districts, annual parliaments, and the payment of delegates, no better or shorter road could be found than a £6 borough franchise. Such a franchise would soon carry the ballot. The secret ballot would necessitate universal suffrage;

for, when the franchise is exercised clandestinely, it ceases to be a trust, and then universal suffrage is required as an antidote. With the ballot, indeed, the suffrage assumes the appearance of being a right, instead of a trust. Electoral districts, again, is the natural corollary of universal suffrage, for it is numerical representation on the strictest law. Consider, then, the effect of giving to the metropolis a quota of delegates exactly proportioned to the number of its voters, under the system of universal suffrage. Assuming the population of London to be 3,000,000, and that of England and Wales to be 21,000,000, then by the law of equal electoral districts, and supposing the House of Commons to consist of the same number as now, the metropolis would return one-seventh of the 500 representatives now returned by the whole of England and Wales. In other words, London would claim as its share of the 500 members at least seventy. Even of the 658 who represent Great Britain and Ireland, London would claim at least one-ninth. Need I depict the consequences, or the character of those elected? Annual parliaments and the payment of delegates would certainly follow in the wake, and possibly would be deemed the most essential and glorious appendages of the system; if not the foundation, at all events, the coping-stones. If not

before, then the programme of the Liberation Society would be carried out in its entirety. Then, if not before, the House of Lords would again be voted useless and dangerous. Then, again, would the axe be laid at the root of our ancient monarchy, and then would the end come. The Liberation Society, therefore, if theorists at all, are only theorists because their designs have been thwarted. But the object in view is eminently practical and practicable, and so also are the means to accomplish it. If the separation of Church and State, and the kindred movement in behalf of complete suffrage or the Charter, be not practical questions; if they be not the very antitheses of theories, then we live, and move, and have our being in the regions of cloud-land and in the realms of airy fancy. Then nothing is real, nothing substantial about us; then nothing is true in history, nothing is tangible in politics; then Democracy, and aristocracy, and monarchy, are mere forms and shadows, devoid of shape, being, and identity; then civil society is a fiction and a myth, and human life one prolonged, predestined pageant; then reason, and will, and mind, are empty sounds; and everything in the world is the result of accident, or else another poetic chaos, which by confusion stands. That false notion about theories, however, is to be

imputed to this other cause, that lies deeper. It is to be referred to a failure of many Churchmen and Constitutionalists to realise the true import, the practical signification of political terms. All things, apparently, continue as they did from the beginning. The clergy are not yet turned adrift from their parsonages and benefices; the bishops are still sitting in the House of Lords; our churches and cathedrals still resound with the simple but majestic strains of the Prayer Book. Yet it is only some two centuries ago since thousands of the clergy were turned out of house and home; since the bishops were wanderers in exile; since the fellows of colleges at Oxford and Cambridge were ruthlessly expelled; since the Solemn League and Covenant was forced upon the nation; since an ordinance of Parliament enacted that—"If any person or persons whatsoever shall at any time or times hereafter use or cause the aforesaid Book of Common Prayer to be used in any Church, Chapel, or public place of worship, or in any PRIVATE PLACE OR FAMILY, within the kingdom of England, or the dominion of Wales, or port and town of Berwick, every such person, so offending therein, shall, for the first offence, pay the sum of FIVE POUNDS of lawful English money; for the second offence, TEN POUNDS; and for the third offence, shall suffer ONE

WHOLE YEAR'S IMPRISONMENT *without bail or mainprize.*" And, contemporaneously therewith, the House of Lords was voted useless and dangerous, the ancient monarchy of the realm was abolished, and the reign of the sects and of the sword followed. By referring, then, to the dismal events of that epoch, I would have my readers strive to realise what is the force and meaning of theories and acts of our day, which can only eventuate in similar disorders and cognate excesses. Political watchwords and political parties are not abstractions. They are no more abstractions than peace and war, than armies and navies, than the marshalling of hosts, the battlefield, the victory, or defeat, and rout, and ruin, and destruction. So far from being abstractions, they are the motive powers of all human destiny. They are the wheels upon which the machine of government runs; the rudder, the chart, and the compass, by which the ship of the state is steered. The rise and fall of dynasties, of states, and of dominion, is but the rise and fall of certain political watchwords and certain political parties. So has it been, as will it be again, with England and with her Constitution,—with the Established Church and with the monarchy. To both the great imminent danger which impends, flows from political watchwords and political parties. It is the base complicity of cer-

tain politicians, under fictitious watchwords, with the Anti-State-Church party, that constitutes the strength and confidence of the latter. What is worse, that alliance exists in defiance of the paramount interests of reason and conscience. I hold that, of itself, the Liberation Society is not as yet dangerous; that, in truth, its own blunders have robbed it of its sting; and that it only claims consideration by reason of its relations with other and more powerful agencies of evil. What, then, are those agencies? They are what I have before pointed out. They are parliamentary and political parties.

That Dissent, since 1844, has been allied to Democracy, I think few will now presume to dispute, in presence of what has been urged in this *brochure*. But I have shown in the fourth chapter how Whiggism also since 1859 has been ensnared, a willing victim, in the toils of Democratic Dissent, and how, at the next general election, Liberal candidates are all to be sworn on a confession of the Liberation Society, or else to be excommunicated. Thus Liberalism in all its phases and all its sections, is to be bound to do suit and service at the behest of the Liberation Society. Not that I accuse Whiggism or even Radicalism of wilful and intentional complicity, as yet, in all the revolutionary pro-

jects of the Liberation Society. What I assert is this, that that Society has formed a programme to meet the views of Liberalism; that instalments only are to be asked for at a time; that Liberal candidates are to be pledged to certain innovations, laid down as the *sine quâ non* of the support of political Dissenters; that the Liberation Society calculates upon Liberal candidates going thus far; and that, when those pledges have been redeemed, other and larger demands will be made, and conceded. Liberalism, in short, is to be cajoled or coerced into a series of gradual concessions, the result of which in the last place, can only be the separation of Church and State. It is not the expulsion of the bishops from the House of Lords, nor the confiscation of tithes, and much less, the entire separation of Church and State, to which Liberal candidates will be pledged, but to such measures as those already brought forward by Mr. Hadfield, Mr. Dillwyn, Sir M. Peto, and Sir J. Trelawny. To demand the former might be to shock and stagger even the credulity of Liberalism; with the latter exactions Liberalism is partly committed to comply already. But the latter are sought not as isolated, single, and definite objects; not as final ends, but as fractions of one exorbitant whole, and as means to gain that end. Neither is it upon such pledges as these that

the Liberation Society relies solely. They constitute perhaps an additional tie; but the one great bond of sympathy and accord between Liberalism and the Liberation Society is of another kind. It is the reduction of the franchise; it is the £6 borough suffrage which the Liberal party has adopted as the basis of a new Reform Bill. This it is to which the Liberation Society looks as to its material guarantee for all ulterior objects. And with good reason. Already the predominant element in the Constitution is that of Democracy. If anything, it is that which disturbs the balance. But a £6 franchise would turn the scale at once,—would for ever give a decided preponderance to Democracy. In the metropolis such a franchise would in reality be tantamount to household suffrage, and would result in the return of members more dangerous than even Edwin James and William Roupell. In the provinces, with a £6 franchise, every town of 100,000 inhabitants would come down to the present level of London; would return not representatives, but delegates pledged to every Democratic innovation sanctioned by the elastic creed of modern Liberalism. The great towns would thus establish a monopoly and a domination. The characters then enthroned on high would be the Daniel O'Connells, the Fergus O'Connors, the Sharman

Crawfords, the Humes, the Brights, and the Mialls of the day. That would be the reign of the demagogues and of confusion. For it is not the working classes of themselves, but the working classes incited and intoxicated by the arts of the demagogue, that is to be feared. Such would be the consequences if any one of the three Reform Bills were passed, which Lord John Russell's modesty represented as the proper supplement to what he originally contracted should be a final measure. Bitterly should we then realise the truth of the adage—*major pars meliorem vicit.* Very properly, therefore, has Mr. Baines of Leeds taken upon him the annual task of proposing the reduction of the borough franchise to £6 occupiers. Mr. Baines was brought up at the feet of the Gamaliel of the Anti-State-Church party. He is the very chiefest of all its apostles, Mr. Miall alone excepted.

Some persons, perhaps, may be inclined to doubt the docility of Liberalism. It may be said that the Liberation Society spreads its net in sight of the bird, openly and avowedly, and that the poor creature will surely not be silly enough to walk into it. Let such doubters look back upon the past and contemplate the present of Liberalism. For thirty years Liberalism has been the creed of trimmers and time-servers. It is so yet. Not that all

Liberals are trimmers and time-servers, but all trimmers and time-servers are Liberals. I speak not of the Radical or Democratic, but of the Whig, section. Political principles and policy have been put on and off, have been reconstructed, altered, and revised, to meet the exigencies of place and power. Alternately the Whigs have done obeisance to Democracy and to the British Constitution; but one characteristic is to be noted in all the gyrations of the Whigs. They trim from the losing to the winning side. They take part with the strongest. Political Parsees, their adoration is paid to the rising sun. Thus are they a faction pestilential and dangerous. They turn about constantly at the wrong time and to the wrong side. When the tide of Democracy is swelling and rolling, the policy of the Whigs is to lash the waves into fiercer tumult. When a current of Constitutionalism sets in, then the Whigs throw oil on the waters, and the calm ocean becomes a stagnant lake. Consider for a moment the great changes of the last thirty years. In 1835, the Whigs in opposition adopted the Appropriation Clause, which, the year preceding, and from the Ministerial benches, they had opposed. In 1837, the Whigs surrendered the principle of Church Rates they vindicated and upheld in 1834. In 1852, 1854, and 1860, finality on Reform was aban-

doned by the very same politicians, who pledged themselves to the Bill of 1832, as to a permanent settlement. In 1859, the Whigs threw down their arms and capitulated to Dissent and Democracy, on the field of Church Rates. Thus under three Whig Premiers,—under Lord Melbourne, Lord John Russell, and Lord Palmerston,—the highest interests of the British Constitution have been recklessly imperilled. Under each, either the Democratic element acquired unusual strength and consistency, or else the wheels of Whig government sank deep in the mire of mismanagement, and refused to move. A crisis supervened. The Democrats struck, and held out for comprehension. And in every instance, and under every Whig Premier, in turn, the Democrats carried their object, whether it were the Appropriation Clause, the virtual or actual surrender of Church Rates, or a Reform Bill. I grant that, on their reinstatement to office, the political compass of the Whigs returned to the Constitutional point; but no credit is due on that score. It was owing to accidental circumstances—to the fact that the strength of the particular agitation had wasted away, and that the Conservative party, though not powerful enough to gain or retain power against the combined assaults of the Whigs and Democrats, was able to prevent organic changes, and was willing

in every case to support the former against the latter, so long as they pursued a Constitutional policy. The only moral, then, deducible from such facts I take to be this, that in its every hour of need,—whenever the pangs of exile to the Opposition benches take hold of Whiggism, when the sun of its official existence is setting, when Democracy is rampant, and when Whiggism is low in numbers, and lower still in talent and in public estimation,—then all its distinctive badges will be scattered to the winds; then whatever of Constitutional panoply remains will be concealed or thrown away; and Whiggism, by another capitulation at discretion, will make haste to propitiate the ravenings of Democracy and Dissent.

Look again at Liberalism, as represented by examples. Read the history of Earl Russell's career, of Lord Palmerston's, of Mr. Gladstone's, or, indeed, of any of those politicians, who once rejoiced in the style and title of the Peel party; of the late Sir J. Graham, the late Sir G. C. Lewis, Mr. Cardwell, and the Duke of Newcastle. Earl Russell's life, as it has been hit off by a master touch, has been devoted to meddling and muddling; but, let it be observed, in avowed disregard of his better mind. If any arguments were needed to expose and condemn the later acts of his public life, I would quote the earlier speeches of Lord

John Russell himself. Neither on Reform nor on Church Rates, considered separately, nor yet on the constitutional bearings of Reform and Church Rates generally, could anything be added, or desired, in addition to the rules and directions laid down by Lord John Russell. Yet, in spite of all his good intentions and constitutional maxims, the faithless expediency of Liberalism has converted Earl Russell into the most accomplished and versatile trimmer of his age and country. *Cum fortuna mutavit fidem* is the only motto for him. His principles are stable as a weathercock, constant as the ups and downs of his own chequered existence. His intentions may be respectable; but if any man has helped to pave a certain road with good intentions, never carried out in action, it is Earl Russell. Hence his promises are mighty, his performance nothing. Lifted up into immature eminence by the events of some five-and-thirty or forty years ago, and by the society of great men who soon left the field open to him, Earl Russell, with the ardour of conscious mediocrity, has ever since been imitating the poor frog in the fable, and trying to convince the world of his monstrous greatness. Never, however, did politician better succeed in convincing his contemporaries of the truth of the saying, "A great empire and little minds go ill

together." Knowing the right, and persistent in the wrong, Earl Russell's case is emphatically that of the servant who was beaten with many stripes. Meddle and muddle is the summary of his life; for rashness, the offspring of vanity, has ever sat at his right hand as chief counsellor.

Lord Palmerston again, is a warning of what Liberalism can do for public men. A Tory of the Tories, the seductions of Liberalism have drawn him aside to consort on familiar terms with ballot-mongers and Chartists; with peace-at-any-price poltroonery and with Anti-State-Church anarchists; with the trusty companions of continental assassins, and with the apologists of Yankee ruffianism. His have been the life and career of a butterfly politician. Principles he never had; and however Conservative his prejudices, they never stood in the way of place. He would do right, but never scrupled to do wrong. Worn and hackneyed in the ways of the world, his faith is gone, his heart hardened, his conscience seared. Never was the political rake better personated in public life than by Lord Palmerston. Even down to his popularity, Lord Palmerston is a representative profligate; for, somehow or other, scapegraces are always liked. Certainly it is somewhat strange that he should be the favourite of Lord Shaftesbury and the Evangelicals. Theirs, perhaps,

is the joy over one repentant sinner. It would be as well, however, if the repentance preceded the rejoicing.

But Mr. Gladstone also will serve as an apt illustration of the plague of Liberalism. To all posterity he will be the paradox of our time. The representative of the most Conservative constituency in the kingdom, he is the hope of the Democrats. He and his colleague lead opposite interests, but yet both are tolerated. The most virulent and personal of politicians, and the most inconsistent, he gets unlimited credit for sanctity and conscientious devotion to duty. Having traded upon borrowed or stolen reputation more than other men, he is deemed the most original of philosophic politicians. Always notorious for sectarianism, he is believed to be cosmopolitan. Stray votes enable him to pass off as a sound Churchman and Constitutionalist, whilst his best energies and gifts are dedicated to the service of a party committed to the policy of the Anti-State-Church Association and of Democracy. Whilst, however, allowing that Mr. Gladstone is always conscientious, I cannot see much merit in such a conscience as his. Certainly it is a conscience that makes him a coward, for he is ever running away from his avowed principles. Is it any excuse for murder that a man is a conscientious assassin? I know not, then, of any

excuse for the daily, abiding perfidy of Mr. Gladstone. For of political traitors Mr. Gladstone is the Judas. He was one of the twelve. He went in and out with the great Conservative Master. He sat at meat with him, and now he betrays his cause with a kiss. Long indeed, too long, has he kept the bag and acted the thief. Long has he cheated Oxford, and yet he is her treasurer. But his last exploit transcends all that went before. No public man in our day has done despite to consistency and principle more wantonly. Like those erratic, but bright and luminous, bodies which at times visit this globe of ours, Mr. Gladstone has appeared and disappeared in the most eccentric orbits; now figuring in the Conservative, anon in the Democratic, sphere, and then again irradiating those nebular phenomena called Whigs. With respect to matters ecclesiastical, Mr. Gladstone, in 1853, gave his most vigorous efforts to secularise the Canada Clergy Reserves, in which he was eminently successful, being well seconded by such worthy allies as Mr. Hume, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Miall. That measure is now one of the proudest scrolls on the banner of Anti-State-Churchism. But Mr. Gladstone holds fast by his integrity on Church Rates, does he not? This I know, that in its Report of 1855, the Liberation Society states

"That local resistance to Church Rates continues to extend, and that, stimulated by the suggestion of Mr. Gladstone, the inhabitants of small towns, and even villages, have carried their opposition to a poll—in many instances with unexpected success, and in all, to the advancement of principles destined to effect changes of a graver kind." Quite recently, Mr. Gladstone has both voted and spoken in behalf of Mr. Hadfield's Qualification for Offices Bill, Sir Morton Peto's Burial Bill, and Mr. Dodson's Oxford Tests Abolition Bill. On civil questions his course leads into a labyrinth still more inexplicable. In 1859, he voted for Lord Derby's Reform Bill, but considered it too sweeping, and reserved his special sympathy for rotten and pocket boroughs. Immediately after, he joined Lord Palmerston's Government. In 1860, Lord John Russell brought forward a Reform Bill, containing, among other proposals, that of a £6 franchise in boroughs. To withdraw that bill, Mr. Gladstone affirmed, would cover the Ministry with "irretrievable disgrace." In a few days afterwards, it was withdrawn. In 1861, Mr. Gladstone did his utmost to embroil the House of Commons in a contest with the Lords, in connection with his Budget. What Lord Palmerston and his ministry justified; what the House of Commons approved by a majority of hundreds

against an odd fifty or so; that was described by Mr. Gladstone as a "gigantic innovation." Long since, therefore, the organs of Mr. Miall and Mr. Bright anticipated the time when, like his brother, Mr. Robertson Gladstone, a *quondam* Conservative, the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone would take a prominent position at the head of the combined factions of Dissent and Democracy. But the last debate on Mr. Baines's £6 Borough Franchise Bill saw another sight, never to be forgotten. What the Times, Daily News, Star, and Nonconformist thought of Mr. Gladstone's performance on the occasion, has been set forth in Chapter IV. What it portended, may be divined in another way, by his own colleagues, by Lord Palmerston and Earl Russell even, taking precautions to put its author under duress. Mr. Gladstone's ambition, indeed, seems to consist in setting class against class, one religion to kick at another, one house of Parliament to bait the other. *Divide et impera* is his motto; and like another personage of overvaulting ambition, Mr. Gladstone had rather "rule in Hell than serve in Heaven." With all his vagaries, then—with the zeal of a Jesuit—with the Jesuit's elasticity of principle to compass ends—with a fatal facility in going wrong—with a more fatal predilection to satisfy himself he is always

right—with a conscience, indeed, trained by subterfuges to mislead—with a public career and character blasted by such an enormity of self-contradiction, personal antipathies, and political gambling,—could any creed save Liberalism afford a refuge for such an inveterate apostate?

Judged, then, as the voice of truth itself taught us to judge, by their fruits, who shall gainsay the reasonable expectations of the Liberation Society, assuring us that Liberal politicians will do its bidding in time to come, as in time past—will pledge themselves to its "moderate standard" now—will bow the knee and submit to its delegated yoke at the next election—and will fulfil its last, best hopes hereafter? Is not Whiggism again on the wane, again falling into the sere and yellow leaf, as under Lord John Russell in 1852, and under Lord Melbourne in 1837, and following years? Is it not also the common ambition of Dissent and Democracy, above all things, to carry that reduction of the franchise already thrice proposed by the Whigs? Granted, then, that standard, and a £6 borough franchise, what will follow? For my part, under such conditions I would not have the safest Church Rate in the kingdom on a two years' purchase. I even make so bold as to predict that Church Rates never will be abolished under the Reform settle-

ment of 1832; and that, I believe, is the view of the Liberation Society. What will abolish Church Rates finally and for ever, will be Mr. Baines's motion, if it succeed; for that motion would bring in its train, first the Ballot, then Manhood or Universal Suffrage, and then that deluge of Democracy which would submerge both Church and State. Over the £6 franchise may well be inscribed as a motto, "*Parvus hic ignis incendium ingens exsuscitabit.*" By relying upon such means, upon purely democratic influences, the Liberation Society, it is true, furnishes a handle against itself. In reality, it admits that the separation of Church and State is not an object likely to gain favour with the educated, reflecting, and independent portion of the community. It confesses virtually that the higher and middle classes are hostile to its design. It also admits that for the separation of Church and State it depends upon the multitude—upon, that is, the high and honourable impulses of passion, prejudice, and poverty, physical no less than mental. And in this view the Liberation Society is perfectly right. Wholesale confiscation is not a policy likely to prove attractive, except to such as have nothing to lose. For if the Church's property, if tithes, glebes, and ecclesiastical buildings, be not safe; if they be once dealt with as seems fit to a dominant Democracy,

dare any person pretend that a redistribution of private property will not follow soon after? Communistic principles once applied to public, are not difficult of adaptation to private property, as the history of the French Revolution proves. From the very nature of things, in fact, the latter process is not only easier, but carried out with greater zeal and more alacrity. What, however, is the strangest feature in this agitation for a £6 franchise, which can and is intended to result only in a revolution, is the dignifying of such proposals with the epithets, liberal, progressive, moderate, reasonable, and such like. Truly in our day words run a great risk of losing their legitimate meanings. Indifference passes for moderation. Rashness is confounded with deliberate valour. Infidelity gets the praise of impartiality. Church-rate abolition, the undisguised robbery of the poor by the rich, the putting into the pockets of the landowners millions of money at the expense of the poor, is advocated as a boon to the poor man. Reform is mostly used where revolution is intended. Stability is based upon change. Retrogression is mistaken for progress. Surely that is neither reform nor progress, which would land this country in the quagmire in which, what were called the United States, are labouring. Is that reform or progress which would

exchange the British Constitution for the "Model Constitution," the envy and admiration of Mr. Bright and Mr. Miall, but which now lives only upon the records of the past, and in bygone memories? Such democratic innovations as lead to that goal—are they the paths of reform and progress? On the contrary, I maintain that they are not only without, but directly opposed to reform; they are not merely motion without progress, but so much worse than "marking time," that they are actual retrogression, precipitous and fatal. Such innovations, in short, are like skating backwards: in appearance, progress; in reality, retrogression, and the more rapid, the more perilous. Yet the whole Liberal party is pledged to a £6 franchise, and the Democrats will prove hard taskmasters, if the Whigs be even inclined to retract. Let us then call things by their proper names, by names which convey the full import of the object named. Let us clear away the confusion and misconception connected with progress and reform. Let us henceforth range political parties into two great classes—the Revolutionists and the Constitutionalists;—and let the reduction of the borough franchise below the standard fixed upon in 1832, be a test by which a politician shall be classed among the Revolutionists, or among the Constitu-

tionalists. Happily a great revulsion of public opinion has taken place of late. What we denominate the British Constitution, is now more generally comprehended, and more appreciated. The catchwords of Reform and Progress no longer mislead, as formerly. Both the middle and upper classes have awakened to the stern realities that await them if ever a £6 franchise be conceded. But whilst dreading and distrusting the guidance of Liberalism, whilst not doubting whither it leads, and that the real danger to the Church and Constitution consists in the alliance of Liberalism with democratic forces, the pusillanimity of many Churchmen and Constitutionalists enhances that danger. In recording the various politico-religious measures brought before Parliament since 1859, I had occasion to discuss the several causes which contributed to their failure. To one, however, I attached paramount importance. I hesitated not to affirm, as a demonstrable proposition, that the improved position of the Church in Parliament is due mainly or altogether to the new adjustment of political parties. Since 1859, Liberals, the Whigs, no less than the Democrats, have made common cause with the Liberation Society. On the other hand, the Conservative party has renewed its original relations of fidelity and protection to the Church. Then

began a reaction in favour of the Church, a reaction which has not yet reached its climacteric. But that reaction, in its depth and extent, depends, as it seems to me, upon the first cause which evoked it. It had its origin in party connections, and with party connections its duration and its limit are inseparably amalgamated. Some persons there may be, who object altogether *à priori* to government by party. In this country, however, such opinions have no place. It may be that political parties occasionally violate principles, but this is certain, that whatever principle or patriotism there is, it is fully expressed by one or other political party. A party may prostitute its principles to factious purposes, as the Whigs have done systematically for over 30 years, but however good an argument may be hence drawn for distrusting for ever the Whig party, no such argument touches the abstract question; neither does such an argument weaken, but rather strengthen, the position I wish to uphold.

It is not only the shameless disregard of principle exhibited by the Whigs towards the Church, but the positive and tried services of the Conservatives in her behalf, that entitle the latter to the confidence of Churchmen and Constitutionalists. Whilst the Liberal party day by day strives better to deserve the epithet Revolutionist, the Conservative party

proves day by day that it will soon comprise in it all who profess and call themselves Constitutionalists. As in 1833, 1834, and 1835, the tumultuous conflict on Reform overflowed and threatened to overwhelm the Church, until Church defence became the basis of the Conservative policy, so since 1859 the progress of events has again identified the Church and the Conservative party. The same cycle of events has reproduced the same reconstruction of political parties. But let it not be supposed that the Conservative party has ever swerved from the basis of 1835. To the principles then asserted, both Sir R. Peel and his party adhered to the last, and to them the Conservative party is still faithful. That which proved an apple of discord, a fatal offence and stumbling-block between Sir R. Peel and the party he founded, was a question, not of politics but of political economy—a question, not of the principles and form of government, but of the principles of trade and the mode of barter,—in short, it was a commercial, not a constitutional question. For neither by word nor deed did Sir R. Peel retract or recant one iota of his constitutional creed to the day of his death. That union, however, of the Church which always existed in the nature of things and in the original compact of the Conservative party, was partly lost sight of and suffered to

fall into abeyance, till the wholesale defection of the Whigs to Dissent and Democracy in 1859 restored it to life, and endowed it with all its pristine freshness and strength. Moreover, the Conservative Reform Bill of 1859 did away for ever with one baseless reproach, often hurled against the party. It effectually met and repelled the charge of obstructiveness. It proved that the Conservative party have no objection to an extension of the franchise, but to its wholesale reduction. To extend the suffrage to every person capable of exercising the trust aright, for the good of the body politic, is Conservative Reform. To lower the standard of the franchise, to admit to the privilege an indiscriminate collection of £6 householders, the presumption being that the majority neither know nor care much about the trust, or how to exercise it,—this is the Liberal idea of Reform.

The Conservative would rather adopt property, the Liberal would rather adopt numbers, as the basis of popular representation. To the former, the *comitia centuriata* of ancient Rome would be the model; to the latter, the *comitia tributa*. And as the *comitia tributa* of Rome gradually degenerated into an ochlocracy, so would any institution in any country based upon the same foundation. As at Rome, in the later times of the Republic, violence

and corruption went hand in hand, and the needy multitude lent a ready ear to intriguing tribunes, so would it be in England. Oligarchs, small and great, would rise up and play the demagogue, and draw away much people after them. This, indeed, is partly true already. The Whigs, the most exclusive and grasping of political cliques, are not seldom found in the front ranks of those popular agitators who use the people as puppets. As regards the democratic faction, the *comitia tributa* would suit its tastes admirably, for they were but the expression of universal suffrage. If the Reform Bill of 1832 is to be taken as the basis of future changes in that direction, then the Conservative policy is that indicated by the Bill of 1859. But the Act of 1832 was based upon no principle whatsoever. A £10 franchise implies no more of principle than an £8 or £6 franchise.

If, indeed, the Bill of 1832 was really intended, as its authors protested repeatedly, to be a final and permanent settlement, no less likely measure could well have been contrived for the purpose. If, then, the first care of a reformer should be to effect a final reform, and to prevent future reformation, either the sincerity or the sagacity of the Whigs was greatly at fault in the Reform Bill of 1832. For in the Bill of 1852, Lord John Russell himself

professed to walk in the light of the final measure of 1832; and by the same light, if we proceed, we may at no distant date reach household and universal suffrage, and the other points of the People's Charter. I conceive, therefore, that a measure of reform might be framed more satisfactory and more likely to prove a permanent settlement, if the Act of 1832 were abandoned. No true Conservative, I imagine, would object to a graduated suffrage and a timocracy blended—the former based upon the axiom that adult citizens should enjoy the franchise, but not an equality of votes—the latter, like the Servian constitution, based upon a property qualification, and the standard adopted being either the income-tax or the payment of rates. Lord Derby himself has protested that he entertained no sort of objection to an extension of the franchise, provided that extension be not combined with any wholesale, indiscriminate reduction of the standard, as, for instance, from the £10 to a £6 rental. And such I hold to be the creed of Conservatism. Such, indeed, is the original creed of the party. In 1835, Sir R. Peel appealed to the electors on the two principles of economy and reform. But reform signified what it implied. National institutions were not to be impaired, much less destroyed. Useless and decayed branches were to be lopped off,

but the trunk was not to be hacked and barked by any democratic axe. And fruitful shoots were also to be engrafted upon the old stock. This is reform indeed. This is to repair the waste places and build up the ancient structure. To remove abuses, to correct defects, to add improvements,—is not that the path of reform? That is the path in which the true Conservative walks. He cares not to conserve mere forms or shadows, or figments of prejudice, but the substantial verities of the Constitution. Hence, he above all others is a Reformer, because he knows that Time is an innovator; that insidious decay steals over all human things; and that, therefore, to preserve national institutions, they must be reformed and recast, to suit progressive changes. But the Liberal and Democrat reforms, not to preserve, but to destroy; not to build up, but to pull down; not to prune, but to cut down the goodly tree. His reform, then, is not reform, but revolution; it is not progress, but retrogression. It is not the path to peace and prosperity, but the highway to tumult, to desolation, and to ruin.

But whilst in its principles, policy, and parliamentary sphere the Conservative party has redeemed its original reputation as the party of Church defence and constitutional progress, there are Churchmen to be found, and Constitutionalists also, who

have not yet given in their frank adhesion to that party. Whence arises this standing aloof and separation? Much of it, I believe, is to be attributed to this one failure—a want of foresight. Many there are amongst us who discern not the times and seasons; who fail to perceive the rapid changes in public opinion and political parties, or who fail to keep up with the new combinations. But since 1844 especially, and since 1859 in a less but yet in a most serious degree, the relations between the different political parties, and again, between those parties and the Church, have been very materially altered. Viewed in their proper relations, there are now only two parties in the State, but they are separated by a Constitutional partition. And what I complain of is this, that many churchmen are afraid partly to draw inferences and partly to follow out in action the inferences consequent upon facts and statements admitted even by themselves. Hence that timid, vacillating, pernicious policy, which aims at ignoring what constitutes as indispensable an element in the discussion of Church questions, as is the maintenance of an Established Church to the integrity of the British Constitution. By that indispensable element I mean the consideration of Church questions through the medium of political parties and political watchwords. For, be it observed, this

amiable but weak precedent of certain Churchmen has long ago been derided and scouted by their opponents. They proceed upon the opposite tack. Gradually they have identified themselves and become allied with, first, Democracy, and now, Liberalism, so that for success in matters ecclesiastical, they trust implicitly in party combinations and political watchwords. Thus they wield the two-edged sword of civil and religious influences. They strike under the auspices of Democracy in the State as well as in the Church. Whatever else may be charged upon the Liberation Society, its agents, and partizans, assuredly they are not men to flinch from the natural corollaries to their opinions and premises, nor are they slow in applying their deductions to the minutest details of their life and conduct, both socially and politically. In both these respects many Churchmen have much to learn and much also to unlearn. Dissent must be combatted with its own weapons. We know how it proceeds, what alliances it has contracted, with what political parties it associates its destinies. If the Church is to conquer in the strife, its members must condescend to employ the same tactics. When Liberalism and the Liberation Society, the two revolutionary elements, make common cause, is it too much to expect a solemn league and covenant to be ratified

between all those favourable to the principle of an Established Church and the Constitutional party? How was it that the Anti-State-Church party rallied in 1841 and 1844? What was Mr. Miall's specific to re-organise and revive a declining cause and party? It was to revert to principles; to build upon principles, and not upon isolated practical grievances; to lay the foundation deep in dogmatic truths, or assumed truths. And the basis adopted was Democracy—the universal equality of man personally and politically. That was and is the foundation of the Anti-State-Church system. The Church Established, on the contrary, can only exist in and with the British Constitution, in and with an hereditary aristocracy and an hereditary monarchy, as Lord John Russell asserted in 1854, and as Earl Russell doubtless still holds. But to believe that Anti-State-Churchism is necessarily Democratic, and the Established Church is necessarily Constitutional, and yet to expect the former not to take part with the Democratic, and the latter not to take part with the Constitutional party, is manifestly preposterous. In any case, such an expectation with respect to Anti-State-Churchism would be vain. It is and for years has been both identified with and allied to the Democratic party. And facts have abundantly proved that virtually the Democratic party

has absorbed what was once the distinct party of Whiggism. In presence then of such an alliance, seeing also that the Church is of necessity identified with the British Constitution, is it not equally right and of necessity, that the Church should form an alliance with the Constitutional party? Besides, this is an alliance not only natural and necessary, but that has existed. This alliance was the original basis of the party formed by Sir R. Peel subsequent to the Reform Bill. This alliance saved both the Irish Church and the English, for no ecclesiastical organisation existed to speak of. This alliance brought about the triumph of 1841. This alliance has never been cancelled. To this alliance we owe all our success of late—the retention of Church Rates, of endowed schools, of the universities, of the parish churchyard, and of the parochial system itself. Besides, the option is scarcely left us. The initiative in this party warfare is taken by our opponents. Not only in 1859, but in 1835 and in 1837 especially, and during every intermediate period, in some degree, ecclesiastical questions were made party questions. The Democrats took the lead. It was on Church questions that they pressed the Whigs. It was on Church questions the latter sold themselves and bargained for Democratic aid. It was on Church questions that

Mr. Miall sought to reconstruct the Democratic party in 1857. It is on Church questions that Liberal candidates are to be tested and rejected or supported by Dissent, at the next general election. Here, indeed, is the great distinction between political Dissenters and political Churchmen. The former are the aggressive party. That Dissent might consist with an Established Church and the British Constitution, is proved by the fact that Nonconformity in times past was purely of a religious character, and wholly disconnected with the political position of the Established Church, and that the Wesleyans, as a body, are still an illustration of the fact. But the Liberation Society and its friends, on principle and by force of conviction, are hostile to the political *status* of the Established Church, and are, therefore, a political faction, combining with other factions for political ends, the great object, however, being to pull down the Established Church.

To repel, then, that aggressive faction, to defend the Church, becomes the duty of every man, who recognises her position as necessary for the well-being of the State. But this is a very different situation to that of the adversary. The political Churchman is not to be compared, but contrasted, with the political Dissenter. To the latter, com-

plete toleration is secured by the law of the land. All positive civil disabilities may be said to have been swept away. Upon the Dissenters, then, is laid an obligation of gratitude, such as Churchmen do not incur. He is tolerated but conditionally. The British Constitution is the prime necessity,—the original desideratum, the great object regarded by the law. Church and State are not the secondary but the primary strata. Dissent is a secondary or tertiary formation, an afterthought, an excrescence. When, then, Dissent degenerates from conscientious Nonconformity into an embodiment of hate and hostility to the Established Church, it violates the conditions upon which it is tolerated; it transgresses the Dissenting Indemnity Act; it challenges not only resistance, but a suspension of its conditional privileges. It tempts and provokes the strong arm of right and might combined to blot out, not only its exceptional immunities, which are simply a trust abused, but its very existence. For the charter of its abnormal liberties bound it not to use those liberties against the Established Church or Constitution. They were granted to Dissent on its own recognisance to keep the peace towards both Church and State. As I have said before, the mere fact of membership in the Established Church, presupposes the duty of defending

that Church and the Constitution of which it is an integral part. When, therefore, Dissent abjures the negative character of Nonconformity, by virtue of which alone the shield of complete toleration was thrown over it; when it voluntarily assumes a wholly different position and character, that of actual belligerent against the Established Church and the Constitution; does it require any elaborate reasoning to prove the paramount duty and obligation of Churchmen to resist and to repel an antagonist, who, so far from preserving the terms of a truce, framed to suit his convenience and interest, takes advantage of those terms to arm, equip, and plan offensive war? But how is such an enemy to be resisted and repelled? By desultory, isolated, fortuitous enterprises? or by regular, combined, premeditated strategy? If any hints be wanted to aid in the solution of so self-evident a problem, I would bid my readers consider first, that for two centuries public opinion in this country has found vent and expression in political parties, and party government; that of all questions, those denominated Constitutional questions belong more particularly to the province of party government; that ever since 1844, at least, political Dissent has identified and allied itself with political parties, with the Democratic party unreservedly and uniformly,

and with the Whig party at every great crisis; that since 1859, the tendency of public events has been to identify both those sections of Liberalism with political Dissent; that at the next general election, every Liberal candidate returned is to be returned under a solemn promise and pledge to conform to the Liberation Society's standard as its delegate; that, on the other hand, the Conservative party was founded by Sir Robert Peel, to conserve all our Constitutional rights, but specially to conserve the Established Church, as the keystone of the whole edifice; that upon this basis, the Conservative party has taken up and has resigned the control of public affairs; that it has never swerved from its original compact with the Church; and that, since 1859, many and conclusive proofs have been given of the vitality of that union, not only in the House of Lords, but in the House of Commons, the more congenial scene of party conflict. Yet, in presence of all those striking and convincing facts, there are those who timidly deprecate an appeal to party on ecclesiastical questions. There are Churchmen, persons who attend the worship of the Established Church; who profess a sincere regard for the Established Church; who denounce the separation of Church and State, that is, the application to secular uses of all the endowments of the Established

Church, as the height of sacrilege and spoliation; and who, or some of them, actually reap the benefit of those endowments,—such persons, I say, are to be found who affect a pious horror and holy grief at the idea of defending the Established Church by means of party organisation. But is not the Established Church a political institution? Is there no distinction, in a political view, between the Established Church and a Protestant Episcopal denomination? Is not the former created by the Constitution, and the latter founded merely upon theological premises? To defend, then, the Established Church, is to defend the British Constitution, is to defend an essential branch of our political institutions. Is there, then, anything unseemly in a political party defending a political institution? Is it not, on the contrary, the proper and peculiar duty of a political party? Is not this to work in harmony with all our past history, and with the great end and aim of party government? May we not say of every political institution, that its maintenance depends upon the watchfulness and timely protection of some political party, that for all our political institutions, indeed, *hæc una salutis via est?* Yet are there Churchmen and Church journalists so blinded and prejudiced, so determined not to see, or so hopelessly warped in their vision,

as to discountenance all attempts permanently to identify and ally the Church and her interests with party government, upon the basis of a common defence of the British Constitution and mutual protection.

When a general election is looming in the near future; when the Liberation Society has contrived a new electoral policy to work candidates and constituencies to its own ends; when that policy is already being carried out; when the Liberation Society avows that its hopes and expectations are built upon Liberalism; and that, from past experience, Liberal candidates are, and will be, ready to agree to its demands, rather than risk their return —under these circumstances, there are in the ranks of those who profess to be Churchmen and Constitutionalists, certain who say in effect—"Never mind—let the Liberation Society go its way, to the separation of Church and State—let Liberal candidates also go their way, though it leads to the same destination—let the Established Church and the British Constitution, as well, go their way, along with the Liberation Society and with Liberalism, to 'that bourne whence no traveller returns'—but let no one put forth profane hand to touch the ark—let no one be pledged to support it—leave the Church to herself to flourish or to perish, as it may

be; but, above all things, let political parties stand aloof from the Church's defence, and of all political parties keep that away which claims as its own the treasure of the Constitution—let not the Conservative party approach—let it not touch even the hem of the Church's garment." Yet the Conservative party has ever risked its safety in the safety of the Church; has ever stood by the Church through evil report and through good report; within the last five years has again rescued the Church from a position of grave and imminent peril. Whence then come such counsels, such graceless, ungrateful, and pernicious counsels, as those I have just noticed? How are they to be accounted for? At what price are they to be estimated? These inquiries it is not difficult to satisfy. If we observe a little, we shall find that the wish has much to do with the thought in the case of the Church's Achitophels. They who propound and obtrude such advice upon the Church are those who have already either gone forth of the Church and Constitutional party, or else who have never belonged to it, and are, therefore, either Liberals or nondescripts. What they are, then, they naturally wish others to become. They require company to keep them in countenance. So equivocal is their own character and position, that the only comfort which remains is the hope,

not of exalting themselves, but of bringing down others to their level. Such advice as I allude to emanates from two different quarters, from those who see nothing but perfection in Mr. Gladstone, and from those who regard Lord Palmerston as the personation of the divinity in man.

To invite Churchmen and Constitutionalists to put their trust in the Liberal party, of which Mr. Gladstone and Lord Palmerston are the greater lights, would be alike foolish and impertinent. Is the Church to rely upon the tender mercies of the Democratic section of Liberalism, a section by principle, and by all its historical antecedents, antagonistic to the Church and the Constitution? Or is the Church to trust again in Whiggism, only to be again sold into bondage, or again handed over as a hostage, as at every previous crisis for the last 30 years, whenever a restless Democracy dictated new terms to the Whigs, and summoned them first to a fresh surrender of the Church's rights? As then it would be hopeless for those apologists of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Palmerston to endeavour to reconcile the Church to Liberalism, they seek to gain their object another way. If the Church refuse to be identified with Liberalism, the next move is, at all events, to seduce it from Conservatism; to widen the gulf, if possible, between the Church and the Constitu-

tional party; and in any case to prevent a formal alliance. Such is the policy of certain Churchmen and Church papers of two different and opposite schools. But the same key unlocks the policy of both. They are themselves in a false position. Clinging to Mr. Gladstone and Lord Palmerston, though from motives and principles the most contrary, through all the mazes of their tortuous careers, they know that to bespeak the Church's confidence for the Liberal party would be as *flagitium damno additum*. But who can make a clean thing out of an unclean? Who can expect those who, as Churchmen by profession, swear by Liberal champions, to recommend the Church to cement and confirm its alliance with the Conservative party? For their own consistency and honour's sake, in a dishonourable course of action—I answer, not one. Hence the specious, craven cawings of those who, being renegades, carry, as usual, the zeal of apostates to excess, and who, beginning with deserting Constitutional principles, go on to betray the Church, and to mislead others, willing to raise up for the Church a wall of defence on her right hand, and on her left. However, the stern logic of facts is too much for the feeble though wily and sanctimonious homilies of Puritanical and Papistical prints, upon the enormities of party government, and the horrible and

heartrending consequences which might ensue, if the Established Church were wise enough in time to see her true interests; rightly to discern between friends and foes, open or secret; and to hie her to the only refuge that remains, for all political institutions alike, whether civil or ecclesiastical, in a country proud of political badges, and governed best and most contentedly by party-combinations. It is not with formularies or doctrines, be it observed, that we have to do in defending the Established Church. It is with Church Rates, with Easter dues, with grammar-schools, with the universities, with the parochial system, with tithe, with glebe, with episcopal and capitular estates, with parsonage-houses, with ecclesiastical edifices, with the privileges of the bishops as peers of parliament —in short, it is with whatever privileges and rights the Established Church possesses, over and above the privileges and rights enjoyed by every other denomination, and which are guaranteed to her by Act of Parliament, and by the Constitution, that we have to deal. Are these to continue and be preserved to the use of the Church, or are they to be taken away and applied to secular uses? If they are to be preserved, they can be preserved only by the use of certain means and agencies. A politico-religious organisation exists to deprive the Church

of all those privileges and rights. What I insist upon, then, is that that combination must be met by a counter-organisation. Dissent and Liberalism go hand in hand against the Church. Let the Church take the proffered hand of the Constitutional party—the only pledge of their common safety and triumphant victory over all the machinations of their common adversaries.

Internal ecclesiastical organisation will not suffice, however potential and comprehensive. Can the Church hope to wield a mightier arm than the Liberation Society? Can the Committee of Laymen or the Church Institution, or both together, command equal resources of money, agents, pamphlets, lectures, public prints, and other equipments? Why, the income of the Committee of Laymen, added to that of the Church Institution, scarcely amounts to half that of the Liberation Society. In internal organisation, then, the Church is not likely to surpass the Anti-State-Church party. But the latter is also in daily and close communion with political parties, and, at the next general election, that union is to be made closer and still more binding. Simple, definite, prescribed pledges are to be exacted from every Liberal candidate, and those pledges, we are told, will be given, and will prove substantial guarantees for the success of Anti-

State-Church measures in Parliament—that last appeal between the Church and Democratic Dissent. Shall not, then, the Church put herself on an equality with Dissent in this respect? Shall she not unite with, and demand pledges from, the Constitutional party? Demand pledges, indeed, she need not, for the Constitutional party is pledged by its very name and being to uphold the Church, but shall not Churchmen, in their turn, support that party, and leave Liberalism to its own chosen consort—to Dissent? Observe, I do not ask Churchmen or the clergy to imitate the profanity of Dissent. The latter, indeed, would be ill advised to mix too freely in the political arena. And in no case do I wish to introduce political or party polemics into the pulpit. Let us keep the newspaper distinct from the sermon, and the sermon distinct from the newspaper. What I urge is this, that the clergy at least stand aloof from Liberalism; that they be no more juggled out of their principles and reputation by Mr. Gladstone; that his "sweeping and levelling Democracy," as the Times calls it, or his "Chartism," as the Star more properly designates it, be permitted to vegetate side by side with John Bright's kindred plants in Birmingham; that lay Churchmen, however, carry their political creed about with them and act upon it; and that,

whether it be in the parish vestry, or in municipal contests, or on the hustings for the election of members of the House of Commons, they give their vote and interest to that political party which makes Church-defence a fundamental article of its creed. Sooth to say, "with all appliances and means to boot," the Church will be hard pressed to hold her own. Her enemies encamp round about her, or lie in wait to deceive. Their tactics are marked at once by boldness and by caution; by boldness in compassing great ends; by caution in the use of moderate means. Whatever blunders the British Anti-State-Church Association committed, the Liberation Society has all but redeemed. At all events, it has struck into the right path at last, the path of the £6 franchise, of which the new champion is Mr. Gladstone. Even the manner and the terms of capitulation have been settled. The Church is to be treated by Dissent as was Carthage by Rome during the last siege. Hostages were first demanded, then arms, then the city was to be dismantled and razed, and her people removed to the interior, but one demand was to be complied with ere another was preferred. So is it to be with the Church. Instalments are what she is to be asked for, but no sooner shall one be granted, than another will be demanded, and ever in more sullen and

angry tones. By the Church, therefore, her character of militant will be fully realised. And she must emulate the Jews of old. With one hand she must hold up her spiritual walls, must confront and confound the enemy's propaganda in her parishes, and, at the same time, extend her own frontiers, so as to embrace in her fold the lost sheep of the house of Israel. With the other hand she must be ready to grasp and quick to wield the weapons of civil warfare in self-defence externally. She must not despise legitimate means against illegitimate, Constitutional aid against anti-Constitutional aggression, the alliance of the Conservative party against a conspiracy of Demagogues.

The lull that we now behold is not even a truce. In every sense it is but apparent not real. This is the very heyday of Democratic enterprise. The surprise of Europe was not greater on the sudden reappearance of Napoleon from Elba, than will be the consternation of Churchmen after the next general election, if they take not timely precautions to defeat the new electoral policy of the Liberation Society. At present we occupy the vantage-ground of recent and repeated successes. Let it not be said of Churchmen, *vincere sciunt, victoriâ uti nesciunt.* Let not the old mistake be renewed. Let no overweening presumption tempt Churchmen

to despise the foe. Though not formidable either in numbers, or in position, the Anti-State Church party is truly formidable in what is more to be dreaded than either numbers or social position—in the spirit that breathes eternal defiance—in the vigour that rivals that spirit—in the calm, assured confidence of waging a holy war—and in the cool, matured policy, which quickly adapts means to ends, measures to men, parties to principles. As Mr. Miall has said, speaking of the policy and motives of the Liberation Society, it is a matter of necessity that they should go on. Theirs is

> "The unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield,
> And what is else not to be overcome."

Whatever betides, they bate not one jot of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer right onward. If defeated in Parliament, the Liberation Society hie them to the parishes; if worsted there, they muster on the hustings. One thing alone they never do. They never cease running to and fro upon the earth, and sowing the fruitful seeds of disorder and sectarian strife. For the spirit that is in them, is that which from the foundation of the world has begotten more persecutions, more tumults, more revolutions than all other causes put together. In

a recent number of the Nonconformist we are told, that "The Liberation Society is strong, simply because its members, in the main, believe that they are doing God's work, and do it in the spirit of faith, hope, love, and prayer. They believe, moreover, that God is working with them; and that while they, in obedience to His will, compass Jericho seven times, and blow their rams' horns, the walls of the city will fall because He has determined it. This is the secret of their energy, confidence, and perseverance. Theirs is pre-eminently a religious movement, and Churchmen will not know how to deal with it until they recognise it as such." But all sorts of imaginary religious movements have taken their rise from fanaticism, and this is the spirit with which the religious movement of the Liberation Society is possessed. When perverted, religious principles become the most potent instrument for evil that exists. It was the religious principles of the Saracens, that spread havoc and devastation over both the east and the west. Conversion or death is but the embodiment of the same principle. It was the religious principle that robbed and despoiled the Jew during the middle ages, and condemned him to be an outcast from all lands. It was the religious principle that invented the rack and the inquisition, and which lighted up the fires

of martyrs. The religious principle is answerable both for the Gunpowder Plot, and for the St. Bartholomew's massacre. It was the religious principle that called forth the Qrder of Jesus, as it was the religious principle which begat the Anabaptist and Mormon. And the religious principle of the Liberation Society is identical with the religious principle of the Mohammedan and the Jesuit. If triumphant, that religious principle will also again generate a civil, as well as an ecclesiastical tyranny. For, besides fanaticism, there is another canker ever gnawing at their very soul's core, and goading on the Anti-State-Church party to desperate resolves. Disappointment has frozen the genial current of their spirits. The sting of fancied social degradation, the stigma of belonging to sects, unrecognised by the State, save as objects of a generous toleration, cuts them to the quick. But their perfect equality means more than equality; it means ascendancy. Their complete civil and religious liberty means something besides—the license of persecution. Their demand for fraternity and brotherhood is that of the younger brother, who wished the inheritance to be divided. Are such antagonists, then, who have already laid siege to the Church's citadel, to be contemned? This is no conflict of supernatural agencies, of divine grace, of

angelic powers. The issue depends upon human means, upon human foresight, upon human energies, upon the living members of the Established Church. Providence favours the strong battalions even here. As the Edinburgh Review puts it, "Superiority of strength is the only real security which the Established Church of every country has for the maintenance of her pre-eminence. If that pre-eminence be lost, she may entrench herself in parchment to the teeth, but the Dissenters will find a way to attack her. As soon as a religious party, which has been oppressed, discovers that from the changes of other circumstances, it has gained so great an accession of strength and popularity, as to enable it to cope with the Established Church, it will either break out into open rebellion, or will begin by making a formal demand, that the prerogative of the Establishment should be transferred, either wholly or in part, to itself. If the Government does not think proper to accede to this demand, a civil war ensues, and it is decided by the sword." If Democratic Dissent has not yet broken out into open rebellion, can it be said not to have plotted against the peace and quiet of the realm? If it have not as yet made a formal demand that the prerogative of the Establishment should be transferred, has it not demanded what amounts to

the same thing, the surrender of that prerogative, and a charter of perfect equality for all religions before the law? Is not the Anti-State-Church movement marked with what Bacon designates as the one of two properties which is most popular, and which tends to the spread of a new sect—"the supplanting and the opposing of authority established?" Are not all Congregational Dissenters, by virtue even of their religious opinions, hostile to the union of Church and State. Certain it is, that Dr. Vaughan, one of themselves, and no mean authority, has openly committed himself to that statement, for, on a recent occasion, he thus expressed himself:—

"Some persons have been much surprised of late, or have affected to be so, on having discovered, as they would lead us to suppose, that Dissenters are really opposed to a union of Church and State. Why, a Congregational Dissenter, from the very essence of what is distinctive in his profession, must be opposed to it. If there be a State endowment of relation, there must be State interference and control in relation to it. That is only proper. But it is of the very essence of our Independency to resist all such interference. In the nature of things, therefore, Congregationalism can never be a State religion. We should cease to be Congrega-

tionalists if we submitted to the State conditions inseparable from every such arrangement."

And the organ of the Liberation Society adopts those sentiments. Are we not, moreover, repeatedly reminded of those grand old times, when the Church of England was overthrown—when the Solemn League and Covenant was the Test Act of Dissent, and when sectarianism was the Establishment? One reverend minister, a rising luminary of democratic Dissent, bewails the want of Cromwell's "triers," and Cromwell's Parliament. He also informs us—"Our motto, has been—still is—'*Pax queritur in bello*'—and if, in the civil wars of our country, Cromwell's standard had so memorable and suitable an inscription, we cannot do better than adopt it as our own, in these conflicts ecclesiastical." I need hardly remark, what every child, who knows its Latin grammar, would detect, that the reverend minister, if he understands Cromwell's motto and his own, does not write it correctly; but really it is somewhat like presuming upon his own ignorance being general to make such allusions at all. If we are to judge of liberty and religion as they existed under the Solemn League and Covenant and Parliamentary Ordinances, then, as Christians, we must loathe the liberty, and, as Protestants, we must loathe the religion. This is the record borne

by John Milton, of those who governed Church and State at that time. With respect to the Parliament he says, "When the superficial zeal and popular fumes which actuated their new magistracy, were cooled and spent in them, straightway every one betook himself, setting the Commonwealth behind, to do as his own *profit* and *ambition* led him." He adds, "then was justice delayed, and soon after denied. Spite and favour determined all:—Everywhere, wrong and oppression, foul and horrid deeds, committed daily, or maintained secretly or openly. Some, who had been called from shops and warehouses *without other merit,* to sit in supreme councils and committees, as their breeding was, fell to *huckster* the Commonwealth. Their votes and ordinances, which men looked should have contained the repealing of bad laws, and the immediate constitution of better, resounded with nothing else but new impositions, taxes, excises, yearly, monthly, weekly. Not to reckon the offices, gifts, and preferments, shared amongst themselves."

Here follows a description of the ecclesiastical hierarchy—the Assembly of Divines:—

"If the State were in this plight, religion was not in much better; to reform which a certain number of divines were called, neither chosen by any rule nor custom ecclesiastical, nor eminent for either

piety or knowledge, above others left out; only as each member of Parliament thought fit, so selected one by one. The most part of them was such as had preached and cried down with great show of zeal, the avarice and pluralities of bishops; that one cure of souls was full employment for one spiritual pastor how able soever, if not a charge rather above human strength. Yet these *conscientious* men (ere any part of the work done for which they came together, and that upon the public salary,) wanted not boldness, to the ignominy and scandal of their pastor-like profession, and especially of their boasted *reformation*, to seize into their hands, or not unwillingly to accept (besides one, sometimes two or more of the best livings), collegiate masterships in the Universities, rich lectures in the city, *setting sail to all winds that might blow gain into their covetous bosoms;* by which means these great rebukers of non-residence were not ashamed to be seen so quickly pluralists themselves, to a fearful condemnation by their own mouths."

"And well did their disciples manifest themselves to be no better principled than their teachers: trusted with committeeships and other gainful offices, upon their commendations for *zealous* and '*godly* men,' but executing their places like children of the devil, unfaithfully, unjustly, unmercifully

. . . . So that between them the teachers, and these the disciples, there hath not been a more ignominious and mortal wound to faith, to piety, to the work of reformation; no more cause of blaspheming given to the enemies of God and truth, since the first preaching of the Reformation.

"Thus they who, of late, were extolled as our deliverers, and had the people wholly at their devotion, by so discharging their trust as we see, did not only weaken and unfit themselves to be dispensers of that liberty they pretended, but unfitted also the people, now grown worse and more disordinate, to receive or to digest any liberty at all."

Another writer of the time (Walker) informs us how Magna Charta was trampled under foot by those committees, alluded to by Milton; how all orders and ordinances of parliament were transgressed; how, in scorn of the Self-denying Ordinance, members held offices by gift or connivance of the parliament; how the Solemn League and Covenant was broken; how taxes were levied three or four times over; how they acted like the thirty tyrants of Athens; and how, at last, the people were generally of opinion that they might as easily find charity in hell, as justice in a committee; and that the king had taken down one Star Chamber and the parliament had set up a hundred. In one of Mil-

ton's sonnets even "To the Lord General Cromwell," occur the lines,—

> "Help us to save free conscience from the paw
> Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw."

With respect to the army, this is what Baxter, one of its chaplains, wrote concerning it:—"I found that many honest men, of weak judgments and little acquaintance with such matters, had been seduced into a disputing vein, and made it too much of their religion to talk for this opinion, and for that; sometimes for state-democracy; and sometimes for church-democracy; sometimes against forms of prayer; and sometimes against infant baptism, which yet (consistent souls) they did maintain; sometimes against set *times* of prayer, and against the tying of ourselves to any duty before the spirit move us; and sometimes about free grace and free will; and all the points of Antinomianism and Arminianism." What was the upshot? Cromwell himself, in spite of himself, was driven to be a tyrant. The animosities and the outrages of the sects superinduced a military despotism under Cromwell, just as the reign of hypocrisy under the Commonwealth entailed the succession of licentiousness under Charles II. To refer, therefore, to the religious equality of Cromwell's day, is to refer to

an era of sectarian supremacy, when, under the names of liberty and religion, every abomination of tyranny and impiety was not only rife but rewarded. However, I am not disposed to quarrel with modern Anti-State-Church anarchists, for making such an epoch their precedent. They are fully warranted in that selection. They too aim at sectarian ascendancy, which means what it meant before, the glorious ascendancy of bigotry, intolerance, cant, fanaticism, and persecution. But as remarked already, the danger to the Church does not arise from anything the democratic Dissenters have done, or can do, of themselves. If the Church be again subverted, she will owe her downfall to other and more subtle and complicated causes. The adders in her path are the artifices and the profligacy of political parties. Never before were Liberalism and Anti-State-Churchism welded together as now, by clamps both of civil and ecclesiastical mould. That the Whigs are again *in articulo mortis* is palpable. That their sense of shame has not been quickened by a thirty years' monopoly of office, and by a ruthless, systematic policy of monstrous renegadism to maintain their usurped dominion, is only what might be expected. Yet in 1841 even, in reference to the indignities meekly borne under Lord Melbourne's government, Sir R. Peel contemptuously

adapted to the Whigs the Jew's words, and said that, nevertheless, *you*

> "Still have borne it with a patient shrug,
> For sufferance is the badge of all *your* tribe."

So long is it since the Whigs took their first plunge into the gulf of trickery and falsehood; so often has that plunge been repeated subsequently, that the process has become habitual, and use has rendered the habit not only necessary, but pleasant and exhilarating. A dastardly expediency, measured by the needs of office or of opposition, is their only regular, consistent policy. Fickle changelings, they lure but to betray, and are then most dangerous when most trusted. Ivy friends of the British Constitution, if they cling to it, it is but to raise themselves, whilst they plant their roots in its inmost recesses, and hasten the dissolution they pretend to avert. The prescient mind of Bacon foresaw what would come to pass, under the Whigs of the nineteenth century, when he thus admonished us of the race of political "fiddlers"—"If a true survey be taken of counsellors and statesmen, there may be found (though rarely) those which can make a small State great, and yet cannot fiddle; as, on the other side, there will be found a great many that can fiddle very cunningly, but yet are so far from

being able to make a small State great, as their gift lieth the other way—to bring a great and flourishing estate to ruin and decay. And, certainly, those degenerate arts and shifts, whereby many counsellors and governors gain both favour with their masters, and estimation with the vulgar, deserve no better name than fiddling; being things rather pleasing for the time, and graceful to themselves only, than tending to the weal and advancement of the State, which they serve."

Such are the Whigs, who for more than thirty years have been fiddling on the strings of the British Constitution. But, worse than the hero of old, the Whigs will not only wrongly win but falsely play. Since 1832 they never troubled themselves much about principles, moral or immoral, but now we may say of the whole party as was said of a certain individual,

> "Nil habuit Codrus,—quis enim negat?—et tamen illud
> Perdidit infelix totum nihil."

With respect to the other section of Liberalism, the party of Mr. Bright and Mr. Miall, the former proclaimed in 1858, that "the party that is really moving and going through the country is tending towards a peaceable, wise and enduring Democracy. I have no object in making these observations, but to show to the people that they have been deluded by the idea that they have a glo-

rious, that is, an excellent Constitution. The Constitution of this country, said to be of a King or Crown, Lords, and Commons, is, in fact, an imposture—an imposture, which I take it to be a part of my duty to expose. John Foster, speaking of the British Constitution, speaks of it as that canted and extolled humbug. They tell us that we owe everything to this Constitution. Now I deny it altogether." Such persons as Mr. Bright, Mr. Miall, and other demagogues belong to what Burke terms "a profane herd of vulgar and mechanical politicians;" a sort of people who think that nothing exists except what is gross and material, who despise as baubles all traditions, local and historical associations, titles of honour and nobility, national instincts, and hereditary virtues. Their grand specific, therefore, for the British Constitution is a free use of the knife and lancet. In their view it is beyond all physic and medicines. Wholesale amputation is the only remedy. Hence the idea of representing numbers and not property, or learning, or fame, or distinctions of any order. But as the latter are and must be in the hands of the few, the representation of numbers is the representation of poverty, and ignorance, and improvidence, and credulity, and suspicion, and misery, and vice, and desperation—a system of representation which can

only result in a re-distribution of property. This, however, is the very object sought by many. If a man has nothing and will not work, it is not long before he entertains what he terms a conscientious objection to the institution of private property. Such are they who pronounce all property to be robbery, but in every populous country, with a large infusion of Londons, Manchesters, and Birminghams, such confessors are by no means rare. Such then is the inevitable consequence of numerical representation, and yet that is the chief article in the creed of Dissent and Democracy, of the parties represented by Mr. Miall and Mr. Bright.

The basis of all government in their philosophy is the maxim—"*vox populi vox dei.*" But the Whigs have fallen in with what is the avowed policy of the Democrats towards the attainment of their ultimate object. Policy, perchance, is using fanaticism for its own purposes, but, in the end, fanaticism will domineer over policy. The Whigs begin by deceiving others, but at last they will deceive themselves. If, therefore, the Democrats are the storming party, the Whigs are as certainly the sappers and miners of the British Constitution. Here, then, a twofold argument may be evolved. Sincere churchmen, who take the part of Liberalism, will see that by voting for Liberal candidates, they seriously

imperil the safety of the Established Church, and our ecclesiastical institutions. On the other hand, Nonconformists being Constitutionalists, will see, that, by siding with the Liberation Society, they compromise the State and all our civil institutions. Thus both Liberal Churchmen and Constitutional Nonconformists are committed to something beyond their intentions. In reality, indeed, however unconsciously or unwillingly, both are lending their influence to overthrow the British Constitution, and towards the transplanting in its stead, of first a Democracy, and then a Despotism. For neither the Established Church of itself, nor the State of itself, comprehends the full idea of the British Constitution. Each is an integral constituent, and neither can exist separately. Whoever, therefore, aids in any way to subvert either, whether he wills it or not, whether he knows it or not, he aids to subvert both. In fact, he is a mere tool in the hands of constructive revolutionists, notwithstanding all his zeal for the Established Church, or all his reverence for the civil institutions of the kingdom. To Church and State may well be applied the saying,—

> "Quo res cunque cadent, unum et commune periclum,
> Una salus ambobus erit."

For the people of England, therefore, the real choice is between Revolutionists and Constitu-

tionalists; between what is set up as the model constitution, that of the late United States—over which is now inscribed, Ichabod—and the British Constitution; between the phantom of a peaceful democracy and a limited monarchy, sustained by an hereditary aristocracy, and an Established Church.

In this narrative nothing have I extenuated; nothing set down in malice. I have striven to find out the true issues at stake, the real cause in question. Those issues and that cause resolve themselves into an election between the two theories of government just mentioned. And a crisis has supervened, when some decided choice must be exercised. But no arguments, I fear, will prevail with those who turn a deaf ear to the warning sounds of current events and passing movements. Now, if not before, we know what are the principles, the objects, and the policy of Dissent. We know something also of its organisation and its party connections. We know that as the Established Church and the State are synonymous, as both coexist coequally under the British Constitution; so Dissent and Democracy are identical, and are both coexistent and coequal under the model constitution of their common devotees. In this country, therefore, Dissent, in its full development, is anti-monarchical.

It is not only anti-constitutional and revolutionary, but democratic, in its first and fundamental principles. In the title of this work, I have referred to the mutual relations and common objects of Dissent and Democracy, but that was in deference simply to conventionality. All the relations of Dissent are common to Democracy, and all the relations of Democracy are common to Dissent, for they are but different names for the same thing. A State Church, then, cannot exist with Democracy. Neither can Dissent and Monarchy coexist. The natural antagonism between the two former, is not greater than the natural antagonism between the two latter, for in both cases it is natural, inherent, ineradicable. It is, therefore, no mere theory to which Dissent is committed, when it seeks to fulfil its mission in this country. It is committed to nothing less than the vindication of its principles—the principles of Democracy. It is committed, therefore, by virtue of its nature and essence to the overthrow of every monarchical institution, in the front rank of which stand a hereditary aristocracy and an Established Church. This much, indeed, is boldly confessed already. What is the separation of Church and State, but the subversion of the Established Church? What is complete suffrage or Chartism but the supremacy of

the democratic element in civil matters? And what place would remain either for a hereditary aristocracy, or a hereditary monarchy, when the Church was destroyed and Chartism was dominant? For that the separation of Church and State, and the system of Chartism are no mere idle, fantastic, unsubstantial pageants, the "baseless fabric of a vision," has been, I trust, fully demonstrated. But something more is known. We know that Political Reform is the shortest and the chosen path to the separation of Church and State, and that that path, as well as the path to Chartism, lies by way of the £6 franchise. We know also that the £10 franchise of 1832 deluged Parliament with petitions for the separation of Church and State, for the abolition of University Tests, and for the ballot and other democratic innovations; that in 1833 a motion was brought forward expressly to effect the separation of Church and State; that three several motions were soon afterwards introduced to expel the bishops from the House of Lords; that the Irish Church was robbed of Church-cess, curtailed of tithe, and all but swept away altogether, so far as its fate depended upon the House of Commons; that Church Rates in England have been seriously endangered, and repeatedly given over for lost; and that but for the exertions of the

Conservative party and the Upper House, the Established Church would ere this have ceased to exist. Such have been the results of a House of Commons elected upon the standard of a £10 franchise. What, then, will be the consequences of a £6 franchise? Let Mr. Baines, its champion, and the heir of an Anti-State-Church inheritance answer. Let Mr. Bright answer, the twin-founder with Mr. Miall, of the Nonconformist newspaper, who, in conjunction with Mr. Miall, established the Complete Suffrage Union, and who avows his agreement with Mr. Miall and the Liberation Society on the question of separating Church and State. Let Mr. Miall answer, who enshrined in the pages of the Nonconformist the eternal union and identity of Dissent and Democracy. "*Help forward the Suffrage,*" said Mr. Miall in 1852, on the platform of the Liberation Society, "*Help forward the Suffrage whenever you can—help forward the separation of Church and State, whenever you can; but if you cannot do both, help forward the Suffrage, and the other will be secure.*" In 1859 the Liberation Society even, in a certain resolution, anticipated the time, when, "by an extension of the franchise, political power will be given to large numbers, who, it is believed, will be prepared to employ it in furtherance of the Society's objects." And does

not the mission of the Liberation Society comprise in it the extension of the franchise, the affording advice and facilities to electors, or would-be electors, and the supervision of the registration of voters? Its electoral action, if not the most prominent, is assuredly regarded as not the least important of its manifold functions. Have not, again, all the tuitional efforts of the Anti-State-Church organisations, for some 20 years and upwards, been directed to prepare the masses to employ the franchise, when bestowed, in furtherance of Anti-State-Church objects?

Knowing, then, all these things and their consequences, what remains for Churchmen, whether Constitutionalists or no, or for Constitutionalists, whether Churchmen or no, but to make common cause, to gird on their armour of self-defence, and to do battle against the evil demon of Democracy, whenever it seeks to take possession either of our civil or ecclesiastical institutions? For my part, though Nonconformists, if not Congregationalists, may well be Constitutionalists, to protect themselves and civil and religious liberty against the levelling Democratic sects, I cannot so readily understand how any Churchman, in this age, can be other than a Constitutionalist. Joseph Sturge, the chairman of the Voluntary Church Association and of

the Complete Suffrage Union, the best representative, therefore, of Dissent and Democracy combined, confessed, "I have never been able to distinguish between my political and religious duties." How, then, can Churchmen? Protestant Episcopalians they may be, but not true members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as by law Established, who make any such distinction. Mr. Miall has said that "Liberal statesmen are the parents of Democracy," and that "a Tory Dissenter" (a Congregationalist, I presume), "is a mystery." Is not a Liberal Churchman, by the same analogy, an anomaly? Is not a Radical or Democratic Churchman not only a mystery, but an absurdity? In insisting, however, upon the duty of Churchmen and Constitutionalists to combine, I mean not to urge all to become agitators. What I insist upon is simply this, that Churchmen and Constitutionalists all exercise the trust of political power and influence vested in them by the Constitution. Let every individual Churchman and Constitutionalist not only use his vote, but so use it, as to uphold both the Church and the Constitution. Escape from the conflict with Democracy we cannot. It is an irrepressible conflict, for which Democracy has long made preparations; in which it carries a high hand; and from which it will not recede, till repulsed.

Concession and submission will but bring upon us and upon our descendants a more severe and more lengthened struggle. To confront and to confound the Democratic invader is the only way to avoid sharper and more enduring trials.

From the first twilight of their glorious history the English people have dearly loved liberty, religion, and commerce, and under the British Constitution liberty, religion, and commerce have flourished as under no other form of government, since this round world was created. All ranks and classes have shared in the general prosperity, but in no age of the world and in no country of any age, did the masses of the people partake in so large a measure of the general happiness, in the diffusion of wealth, the progress of science, the sympathy of enlightened philanthrophy, and the development of Christian civilisation. Is not, then, the Constitution of these realms bound up with the welfare, the prosperity, the happiness of the people? Has not the union of Church and State preserved and confirmed to the people of England that union of sober liberty, rational religion, and legitimate commerce, which no other clime and no other age has ever produced? Is not our monarchy limited by the privileges of the people? Wherever liberty would spatiate, there prerogative is confined. Is not our aristocracy the

most democratic that ever existed? Does it not both spring from the people and return to the people? When, again, did the democratic element possess at once so much independence and so much sobriety? When was the harmony between the three principles of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, so even, so spontaneous, so seldom disturbed, as under the balance of the British Constitution? Is not the Established Church the chain which binds together those several orders and different estates, at whose altars and fanes the monarch, no less than the multitude, does homage to the common Creator of all? But though a sober, wise, and understanding people, infatuation once seized upon the nation; upon the monarch who sat upon the throne, and upon the subjects who owed him allegiance. Our ancient institutions were abrogated, but only to be rectified and restored. Yet there live amongst us now those who aspire to repeat the experiment of the seventeenth century; who openly avow their principles and objects; and who have long combined to carry them out to their final consequences. They would again pull down —that is the favourite term—the altar and the throne—for both stand or fall together, as history teaches and reason proves.

When, then, bad men conspire to pull down the

noble edifice of our Constitution, let good men combine to sustain, to repair, and to preserve it. So to combine is to unite in the cause of liberty, the best of earthly blessings; in the interest of religion, the best of heaven's gifts; in the behalf of commerce, the best of social bonds. In such a union we combine in gratitude to our ancestors, who won and bequeathed those privileges; in justice to ourselves, who daily enjoy them; and in duty to posterity, who have a claim upon the entail of those privileges, in all their plenitude. With the poet, then, long may the people of England devoutly exclaim,—

"Hail to the Crown by Freedom shaped—to gird
An English Sovereign's brow! and to the Throne
Whereon he sits! Whose deep foundations lie
In veneration and the people's love,
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
Hail to the state of England! and conjoin
With this a salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual Fabric of her Church:
Founded in Truth: by blood of Martyrdom
Cemented; by the hands of Wisdom reared
In beauty of holiness; with order'd pomp
Decent, and unreproved. The voice that greets
The Majesty of both, shall pray for both:
That mutually protected and sustained,
They may endure as long as sea surrounds
This favoured land, or sunshine warms her soil."

Wordsworth's Excursion.

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